

INSIDE TODAY

U.S. NEWS

ORCA ATTACK



Police stand at a gate as killer whales swim in tanks at the SeaWorld park in Orlando, Fla. on Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010. Earlier in the day, an orca killed a trainer who slipped or fell in its tank, drowning her in front of an audience.

Read more on Page A5

SPORTS NEWS

RECORD WIN



Philadelphia University Coach Herb Magee passed Bob Knight with his 903rd career win, becoming the winningest men's coach in NCAA history.

Read more on Page A12



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Toyota faces lawmakers: 'I'm deeply sorry'

LAURIE KELLMAN
STEPHEN MANNING

Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Toyota chief executive Akio Toyoda apologized personally and repeatedly Wednesday to the United States and millions of American Toyota owners for safety lapses that have led to deaths and widespread recalls. Unimpressed lawmakers blistered the world's largest automaker with accusations of greed and insensitivity.

"I'm deeply sorry for any accident that Toyota drivers have experienced," the grandson of the founder of the Japanese auto giant

told the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. He suggested his company's "priorities became confused" in a quest for growth over the past decade at the expense of safety concerns.

Toyoda told the panel he was "absolutely confident" there was no problem with the electronics of Toyota vehicles and repeated the company's stance that sudden accelerations were caused by either a sticking gas pedal or a misplaced floor mat. Some outside experts have suggested electronics may be at the root of the problems. Toyota has recalled 8.5 million vehicles,

Italy convicts 3 Google execs in abuse video case



In this Oct. 14, 2009 file photo a sign designates the Google headquarters in Mountain View, California, USA. The European Commission on Wednesday Feb. 24, 2010 said it has asked Google to comment on allegations by rivals it demotes their sites in its search rankings.

Associated Press

Read more on Page 6



Toyota President and Chief Executive Officer Akio Toyoda, left, and Yoshimi Inaba, right, president and chief executive officer, Toyota Motor North America, are sworn-in on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010, prior to testifying before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing on Toyota.

Associated Press

mostly to fix problems with floor mats trapping gas pedals or with pedals getting stuck. In addition, Toyoda said the company is making changes

so brake pedals can override a sudden acceleration and bring a runaway vehicle to a safe stop.

Continued on Next Page

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House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Rep. Edolphus Towns, D-N.Y., right, and the committee's ranking Republican Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif. listen to testimony from Toyota President and Chief Executive Officer Akio Toyoda, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010, during the committee's hearing on Toyota.

I'M DEEPLY SORRY

Continued from Front Page

The company said Wednesday it will offer free at-home pickup of vehicles covered by the national safety recall, pay for customers' out-of-pocket transportation costs and provide drivers free rental cars during repairs. The deal — costs to the company weren't specified — was initially announced as part of an agreement between Toyota

Associated Press and New York state.

After an exchange of pleasantries that included praise from committee members for his willingness to step into a lion's den, Toyoda and a top deputy drew heavy fire from both Democrats and Republicans for the company's slowness in dealing with safety defects in its autos and trucks that led to deaths and eventually the massive recalls.

Rep. John Mica, a Republican, said it was a "very embarrassing day" for Toyota and for U.S. highway safety regulators. He said he was equally embarrassed for U.S. Toyota dealers and for the thousands of hardworking Americans in "Toyota plants across the country."

Mica held aloft a copy of a July 2009 internal Toyota document boasting of a "win" for Toyota in striking a deal with the U.S. government for a more limited recall involving floor mats. The document said the agreement saved the company \$100 million.

Rep. Paul Kanjorski, a Democrat, cited "injuries and the damages suffered by innocent Americans ... who like myself have grown up in an atmosphere that we had a great deal of faith in something that was stamped 'Made in Japan.'"

"It was of the highest reliability. You injured that thought process in the American public and you will

be called upon in our system to pay compensation for that," Kanjorski said.

And Rep. Elijah Cummings, a Democrat, told the Toyota chief, "It's one thing to say you're sorry. It's another when it seems as if time after time there are pronouncements that problems are being addressed and over and over again it seems like they're not being addressed."

He asked why Americans "should pay hard-earned money on a Toyota in hard economic times?"

"I sincerely regret that some people actually encountered accidents in their vehicles," said Toyoda, who gave his opening remarks in heavily accented English but chose to respond to questions in Japanese with a translator.

Toyoda said that great strides had been taken by his company to put "safety first. Notwithstanding that, accidents actually happen," he said.

House committee chairman

Edolphus Towns welcomed Toyoda and thanked him for volunteering to testify. "We're very impressed with that. It shows your commitment to safety as well," Towns said.

Toyoda pledged his company would change the way it handles consumer complaints, including seeking greater input from drivers and outside safety experts when considering recalls. Toyota managers will also drive cars under investigation to experience potential problems first hand, he said.

Toyoda read from prepared remarks that had been released the day before.

"My name is on every car. You have my personal commitment that Toyota will work vigorously and unceasingly to restore the trust of our customers," he said. He delivered his short remarks clearly in somewhat accented English. However, when the questioning session began, he switched to Japanese with the help of a translator. □



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Snow storms blanket Northeast; second storm on tap

By MICHAEL HILL

Associated Press Writer

ALBANY, N.Y. — A powerful winter storm dumped a foot or more of snow in the Northeast on Wednesday, knocking out power to thousands and stalling air traffic from Boston to Philadelphia, all ahead of a second system packing strong winds that could blanket the area with another foot of snow.

The storm cut a swath from eastern Pennsylvania into northern New England, slamming typically snowy regions that had been spared the paralyzing storms that hit cities farther south earlier this winter. About 150,000 customers lost power Wednesday, hundreds of schools were closed and at least three traffic deaths were blamed on the storm.

An 89-year-old woman died in a crash in New York's Hudson Valley. In Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains, a woman and a boy died when their vehicle slid off snow- and ice-covered Interstate 80; The man driving the car was not expected to survive.

The system was the first of a 1-2 winter punch. Another storm forecast to hit Thursday is expected to pack winds of up to 50 mph, which could cause more power outages, and dump a foot or more of snow on some areas by Friday. Meteorologists said some areas of New York's Adirondack and Catskill mountains and Vermont's Green Mountains could get as much as 2 feet by the weekend.

Philadelphia, which has had its snowiest winter with more than 70 inches and is still digging out from earlier back-to-back storms, could see as much as a foot of snow.

"It might not be until early next week that we get rid of the storm completely," said meteorologist Hugh Johnson of the National Weather Service's Albany office.

A description of the coming storm as a "snowicane" by State College, Pa.-based Accuweather Inc. touched off criticism — one newspaper called it a "smackdown" — by the National Weather Service.

On Tuesday, 48 hours before the storm was to hit, Accuweather called it "hurricane-like," a "monster," and a "powerful storm of historical proportions" that would wreak havoc from Pennsylvania to Maine and by Wednesday was using the term "snowicane."

That prompted a stern response from National Weather Service meteorologist Craig Evanego. "It's almost inciting the public, inciting panic," he said.

The Weather Channel called the hurricane talk "bad meteorology."

Accuweather senior meteorologist and director of forecasting operations Ken Reeves called the NWS criticism "unfounded" and said there is nothing wrong in using language that gets people's attention when the situation calls for it.

The northern edge of Wednesday's storm reached into the Massachusetts' Berkshires, Vermont and New Hampshire, dumping more than a foot of snow in some areas and prompting flooding concerns in Maine. The hardest hit area Wednesday was Albany, N.Y., where some outlying areas had about 2 feet of snow by afternoon. The snow was so thick and heavy that even pickup trucks got stuck trying to plow it out.

"We tried the snowblower and it didn't work. It keeps clogging up," said Pat McDonough as she shoveled her front walk in Voorheesville, a village just west of Albany.

While parts of the Northeast dealt with Wednesday's weather, other cities were preparing for another blast

of winter.

In New York City, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said the city was making sure building owners were aware of the predicted high winds and were taking steps to tie down anything that could come loose.

"My hope is that the snow will stay to the north and west of us and we'll just have rain — our kids need another school day," Bloomberg said. "We will cancel school only if it really would be dangerous to get the kids into school and get them home."

In Pennsylvania, State Transportation Secretary Allen Biehler is urging motorists to avoid unnecessary travel in a storm forecast to bring snow and gusty winds.

The system expected to create the storm that will travel up the Atlantic Coast was causing problems in the South on Wednesday. The weather service issued a winter storm warning through Friday morning for mountainous areas of western North Carolina, where forecasters said up to 10 inches was possible by Thursday evening.

Wednesday's Northeast storm ended a long stretch without a major snowfall in eastern New York and northern New England. The region had avoided much of the severe weather that slammed the mid-Atlantic in recent weeks.

Some New England areas had been forced to cancel winter festivals, dog sled races and snow sculpting events this year due to the lack of any snow at all. At Vermont's Mad River Glen ski area, the storm "was a godsend," spokesman Eric Friedman said.

"Thank God Mother Nature was listening," he said.

New York's power outages stood at 117,000 Wednesday afternoon, down from 135,000 earlier in the day. Most are in the Hudson



Tony Cordero of Albany bikes in the snow in Albany, N.Y., on Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010. The first in a double-whammy storm has dumped more than a foot of wet, heavy snow on parts of eastern New York, closing hundreds of schools and knocking out power to more than 100,000 customers.

Associated Press

Valley. Another 32,000 were reported in Vermont and western Massachusetts. Schools were closed around eastern New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and western Massachusetts. Contractor Jim Conde spent the morning plowing eight

private roads outside Albany, getting stuck several times in the deep, compressed snow. With more on the way, he was likely to stay busy. "That's what scares me the most," he said. "If we do get more, where are we going to put it?" □

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Sen. Scott Brown, R-Mass., right, and Senate Majority Leader Sen. Harry Reid of Nev., are seen on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010, prior to boarding the Senate subway.

Associated Press

ANDREW TAYLOR
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP)

— Companies that hire the unemployed would claim new tax breaks under a jobs-promoting bill the U.S. Senate passed Wednesday, delivering President Barack Obama and Democrats a much-needed victory.

The 70-28 vote sends the bill back to the House, which passed a far more costly measure in December. Many in the House consider the Senate bill too puny, but they may simply adopt it and send it to Obama in order to get a win. Democratic leaders, wary of voter wrath in November elections, promise more so-called jobs bills are on the way.

It is the first major bill to pass the Senate since the Dec. 24 passage of a deeply controversial health care bill and the subsequent election of Massachusetts Republican Scott Brown, which rocked Democrats by demonstrating their falling standing even among heavily Democratic voters. The bill contains two major

provisions. First, it would exempt businesses hiring the unemployed from the 6.2 percent Social Security payroll tax through December and give them an additional \$1,000 credit if new workers stay on the job a full year.

Second, it would extend highway and mass transit programs through the end of the year and pump \$20 billion into them in time for the spring construction season. The money would make up for lower-than-expected gasoline tax revenues.

The Senate's \$35 billion proposal is a far smaller measure than the \$862 billion economic stimulus bill enacted a year ago.

Senate approves tax breaks for new hires

The measure cleared a key hurdle Monday when Brown and four other Republicans broke party ranks to defeat a filibuster. Republican leaders said Majority Leader Harry Reid, a Democrat, had used strong-arm tactics to bring the measure to the floor.

In all, 13 Republicans voted for the measure Wednesday. Sen. Ben Nelson was the only Democrat in opposition.

Sen. Judd Gregg, top Republican on the Senate Budget Committee, blasted the measure for increasing the budget deficit to fund highway and transit programs. He said the measure made a joke of Democratic promises to adhere to "pay-as-you-go" budget rules requiring new spending programs to not increase the deficit.

"I don't think you get people back to work in this nation by loading more and more debt onto the next generation," Gregg said.

The new hiring tax credit

could spur about 250,000 new jobs, according to economist Mark Zandi of Moody's Economy.com. The economy has shed 8.4 million jobs since the recession began in December, 2007.

Sen. Charles Schumer, a Democratic leader and a sponsor of the hiring tax break, said it would have an immediate impact since businesses won't have to apply for it when doing their taxes a year from now.

"It immediately takes effect," Schumer said. "It goes right to small businesses."

In addition to the hiring tax incentives and highway funding, the bill would extend a tax break for small businesses buying new equipment and modestly expand an initiative that helps state and local governments pay for infrastructure projects.

Republicans and some Democrats were unhappy that Reid brought the jobs bill to the floor after abruptly

dumping about \$70 billion worth of tax breaks for businesses and individuals, help for the unemployed and additional Medicare payments to doctors that had been introduced by Sens. Max Baucus, a Democrat and Charles Grassley, a Republican, the chairman and senior Republican on the Finance Committee, respectively.

Most, if not all, of those ideas are expected to return in subsequent legislation.

"We're just getting started," said Baucus. "Our goal is to make sure that get bills passed that help people get more jobs. That's what they want."

Before lawmakers can pass more jobs legislation, the Senate will have to first approve a stopgap measure to continue the help for the unemployed doctors in a government health care program that Reid had dropped from the earlier jobs legislation. The help currently expires on Feb. 28. □

Former US VP Cheney released from hospital

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Vice President Dick Cheney left a Washington hospital on Wednesday following a heart attack he suffered earlier in the week.

Spokesman Peter Long said Cheney was feeling good. "He will resume his normal schedule shortly," Long said of Cheney, who has remained an active player in Republican politics.

The 69-year-old Cheney was

hospitalized Monday after experiencing chest pains.

Aides say the heart attack was mild. It was his fifth since age 37, and he has undergone several heart procedures since. A heart attack occurs when blood flow to the heart muscle is blocked. Surviving five heart attacks makes Cheney unusual, showing that he has good medical care as well as a particularly aggressive form of heart

disease.

Those close to Cheney say he has grown adjusted to living with the disease, with help from his family.

The vice president is a prominent critic of President Barack Obama's administration and remains one of the most prominent voices in the Republican Party, choosing to stay in the spotlight while former President George W. Bush has not. □



TODAY

KEEP ARUBA CLEAN...



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Whale kills trainer as horrified spectators watch

MIKE SCHNEIDER

Associated Press Writer

ORLANDO, Florida (AP)

— A SeaWorld killer whale seized a trainer in its jaws Wednesday and thrashed the woman around underwater, killing her in front of a horrified audience. It marked the third time the animal had been involved in a human death.

Distraught audience members were hustled out of the stadium immediately, and the park was closed.

Trainer Dawn Brancheau, 40, was one of the park's most experienced. It was not clear if she drowned or died from the thrashing.

A former contractor with SeaWorld told the Orlando Sentinel that the whale, Tilikum, is typically kept isolated from SeaWorld's other killer whales and that trainers were not allowed to get in the water with him because of his violent history.

There were conflicting accounts of the attack. The sheriff's office said Brancheau slipped or fell into the whale's tank, but at least one witness said the animal leaped from the water and dragged the woman in.

A retired couple from Michigan told The Associated Press that Wednesday's killing happened as a noontime show was winding down, with some in the audience staying to watch the animals and trainers.

Spectator Eldon Skaggs

said Brancheau was on a platform with the whale and was massaging it. He said the interaction appeared leisurely and informal.

Then, Skaggs said, the whale "pulled her under and started swimming around with her." Skaggs said an alarm sounded and staff rushed the audience out of the stadium as workers scrambled around with nets. Skaggs said he heard that during an earlier show the whale was not responding to directions. Others who attended the earlier show said the whale was behaving like an ornery child.

The couple left and did not find out until later that the trainer had died.

"We were just a little bit stunned," said Skaggs' wife, Sue Nichols.

Another audience member, Victoria Biniak, told WKMG-TV the whale "took off really fast in the tank, and then he came back, shot up in the air, grabbed the trainer by the waist and started thrashing around, and one of her shoes flew off."

Two other witnesses told the Sentinel that the whale grabbed the woman by the upper arm and tossed her around in its mouth while swimming rapidly around the tank. Brazilian tourist Joao Lucio DeCosta Sobrinho and his girlfriend were at an underwater viewing area when they suddenly saw a whale with a person in its mouth.

The couple said they watched the whale show at the park two days earlier and came back to take pictures. But on Wednesday the whales appeared agitated.

"It was terrible. It's very difficult to see the image," Sobrinho said.

A SeaWorld spokesman said Tilikum was one of three orcas blamed for killing a trainer in 1991 after the woman lost her balance and fell in the pool at Sealand of the Pacific near Victoria, British Columbia.

Steve Huxter, who was head of Sealand's animal care and training department then, said Wednesday he's surprised it happened again. He says Tilikum was a well-behaved, balanced animal.

Tilikum was also involved in a 1999 death, when the body of a man who had sneaked by SeaWorld security was found draped over him. The man either jumped, fell or was pulled into the frigid water and died of hypothermia, though he was also bruised and scratched by Tilikum.

At the stadium, a black shroud could be seen covering what appeared to be a body lying on the concrete near the water as the animals swam just a few feet away.

Later Wednesday, SeaWorld in San Diego also suspended its killer whale show. It was not clear if the killer whale show has been suspended at SeaWorld's San Antonio location, which is closed until



In this photo taken on Dec. 30, 2005, Dawn Brancheau, a whale trainer at SeaWorld Adventure Park, is shown while performing. Brancheau was killed in an accident with a killer whale at the SeaWorld Shamu Stadium Wednesday afternoon, Feb. 24, 2010.

Associated Press

the weekend.

According to a profile of Brancheau in the Sentinel in 2006, she was one of SeaWorld Orlando's leading trainers. It was apparently a trip to SeaWorld at age 9 that made her want to follow that career path.

"I remember walking down the aisle (of Shamu Stadium) and telling my mom, 'This is what I want to do,'" she said in the article.

Brancheau worked her way into a leadership role at Shamu Stadium during her career with SeaWorld, starting at the Sea Lion & Otter Stadium before spending 10 years working with killer whales, the newspaper said.

She also addressed the dangers of the job.

"You can't put yourself in the water unless you trust them and they trust you," Brancheau

said.

Steve McCulloch, founder and program manager at the Marine Mammal Research and Conservation Program at Harbor Branch/Florida Atlantic University, said the whale may have been playing, but it is too early to tell.

"I wouldn't jump to conclusions," he said. "These are very large powerful marine mammals. They exhibit this type of behavior in the wild. 'Nobody cares more about the animal than the trainer. It's just hard to fathom that this has happened.'"

Mike Wald, a spokesman for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration office in Atlanta, said his agency had dispatched an investigator from Tampa.

Wednesday's death was not the first attack on whale trainers at SeaWorld parks. □



Dr. Romell Madison, left to right, Lance Madison and Jackie Madison Brown talk to attorney Mary Howell in New Orleans, Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010, after Michael Lohman, a former lieutenant of the New Orleans Police Department, pleaded guilty to conspiring with fellow NOPD officers to obstruct justice by covering up a police-involved shooting that killed their brother, Ronald Madison, during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Associated Press

Ex-officer pleads guilty in Katrina killing probe

MARY FOSTER

MIKE KUNZELMAN

Associated Press Writers

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A former police lieutenant pleaded guilty Wednesday to conspiring to obstruct justice after federal officials say he helped cover for officers who killed two people on a bridge in the chaos following Hurricane Katrina.

Federal investigators say former Lt. Michael Lohman knew that two people shot to death as they crossed the Danziger Bridge had no weapons, but he and others filed false reports to make the shootings seem justified. Four other people were wounded.

Family members of the victims gathered at the downtown federal courthouse as Lohman arrived to enter his plea.

"We are very, very happy about the progress that the FBI and the U.S. Justice Department have made," said Dr. Romell Madison, brother

of Ronald Madison, who was killed on the bridge. "It's a tremendous relief for us to see some sort of closure. The people of New Orleans should be relieved that there is still justice for everybody here."

Seven officers were charged with murder or attempted murder in the Sept. 4, 2005, shootings, just days after Katrina smashed levees and flooded 80 percent of the city. But a state judge dismissed the charges in 2008.

Until Lohman's plea Wednesday no one had been convicted in the deaths of Madison, a 40-year-old mentally disabled man, and 19-year-old James Brissette. Four others were wounded.

Survivors have said the officers fired at unarmed people who were crossing to get food at a grocery store. The officers acknowledged shooting at people on the bridge, but claimed they did so only after being fired on. □

Italy convicts 3 Google execs in abuse video case



In this video image Judge Oscar Magi, left, flanked by an unidentified aide, delivers a verdict in a court room in Milan, Italy Wednesday Feb. 24, 2010. In the first such criminal trial of its kind, Judge Oscar Magi, sentenced three Google executives Wednesday to a six-month suspended sentence and absolved them of defamation charges.

Associated Press

COLLEEN BARRY

Associated Press Writer

MILAN (AP) — An Italian court convicted three Google executives of privacy violations Wednesday because they did not act quickly enough to remove an online video that showed sadistic teen bullies pummeling and mocking an autistic boy.

The case was being closely watched around the world due to its implications for Internet freedom.

In the first such criminal trial of its kind, Judge Oscar Magi sentenced the three in absentia to a six-month suspended sentence and absolved them of defamation charges. A fourth defendant, charged only with defamation, was acquitted.

Google called the decision “astonishing.” “We will appeal this astonishing decision,” Google spokesman Bill Echikson said at the courthouse. “We are deeply troubled by this decision. It attacks the principles of freedom on which the Internet was built.”

Those convicted were Google’s global privacy counsel Peter Fleischer, its senior vice president and chief legal officer David Drummond and retired chief

financial officer George Reyes. Senior product marketing manager Arvind Desikan, based in London, was acquitted. All four had denied wrongdoing.

“The judge has decided I’m primarily responsible for the actions of some teenagers who uploaded a reprehensible video to Google video,” Fleischer, who is based in Paris, said in a statement.

He noted with irony that he was convicted for privacy violations despite devoting his career to “preserving and protecting personal privacy rights.”

Drummond said he was “outraged” that he was found criminally responsible for the video, noting that both European Union and Italian law recognized that Internet service providers like Google are not required to monitor content that they host.

“This verdict sets a dangerous precedent,” Drummond said in a statement. “(It also) imperils the powerful tool that an open and free Internet has become for social advocacy and change.”

In the United States, the Communications Decency Act of 1996 generally gives Internet service providers immunity in cases like this, but no such protections

exist in Europe.

The verdict could help define whether the Internet in Italy — and perhaps beyond — is an open, self-regulating platform or if content must be better monitored for abusive material. It comes as Google already is facing regulatory challenges in Italy, where a draft bill would require Internet sites to control content the same way television stations do. Google has lobbied for changes to the bill.

Google, based in Mountain View, California, had called the trial a threat to freedom on the Internet because it could force providers to attempt an impossible task — prescreening the thousands of hours of footage uploaded every day onto sites like YouTube.

Prosecutors had insisted the case wasn’t about censorship but about balancing the freedom of expression with the rights of an individual.

Prosecutor Alfredo Robledo said he was satisfied with the decision because it upheld the principal of privacy and put the rights of the individual ahead of those of a business. It could force Google, and any other hosting platform, to better monitor its video, he added. □



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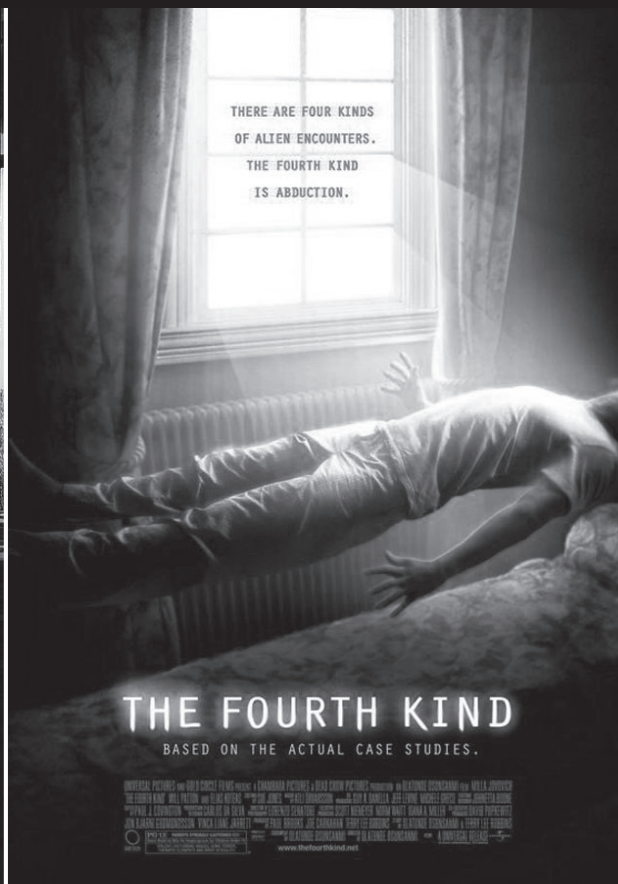
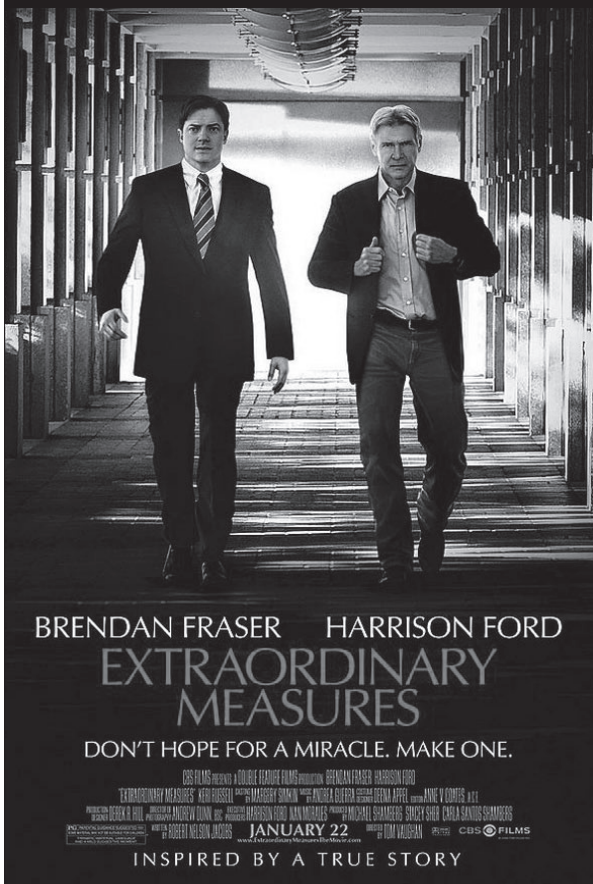
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| PG-13 | THE FOURTH KIND | 6:00 | 8:30 | NEW |
|-------|--|------------------|------------------|------|
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: 1:00 | 3:15 | late show: 11:00 | |
| PG-13 | THE LOVELY BONES | 5:30 | 8:30 | |
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: 2:30 | late show: 11:30 | | |
| R | EDGE OF DARKNESS | 4:30 | 6:30 | 9:00 |
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: 2:00 | late show: 11:30 | | |
| PG | ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL" | 4:30 | | |
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: 12:30 | 2:30 | late show: | |
| PG | VALENTINE'S DAY | 6:30 | 9:00 | |
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: 12:45 | 3:30 | late show: 11:45 | |
| R | THE WOLFMAN | 6:00 | 8:45 | |
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: 12:15 | 3:00 | late show: 11:30 | |
| R | LEGION | 7:00 | 9:30 | |
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: | | late show: 12:00 | |

AT PASEO HERENCIA

| PG | EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES | 6:00 | 8:30 | NEW |
|-------|-------------------------------|------|------------------|------|
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: 1:00 | 3:30 | late show: 11:00 | |
| PG-13 | DEAR JOHN | 6:15 | 8:45 | |
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: 1:15 | 3:45 | late show: 11:30 | |
| PG | PERCY JACKSON & THE OLYMPIANS | 5:30 | 8:15 | |
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| R | THE BOOK OF ELI | 6:00 | 9:00 | |
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: 12:15 | 3:00 | late show: 11:45 | |
| R | FROM PARIS WITH LOVE | 4:00 | 6:15 | 8:30 |
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: 1:45 | | late show: 11:00 | |
| PG-13 | AVATAR | 4:45 | 8:00 | |
| | daily: | | | |
| | matinee: 1:30 | | late show: 11:15 | |

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Gunmen kill 13 people in southern Mexican town

IXTLI X. MARTINEZ
Associated Press Writer

OAXACA, Mexico (AP) — Gunmen stormed a rural town in southern Mexico and killed 13 people, while the U.S. government warned Americans against traveling to cities in a northern border state where shootouts have left slain 19 people over three days.

Hooded assailants in several cars killed nine police officers at a checkpoint in San Vicente Camalote, a town in southern Oaxaca state, state deputy attorney general Netolin Chavez said Wednesday.

The gunmen then burst into the ranch of Alfonso Maciel, killing him and his three sons, one of whom was a minor, Chavez said. He said investigators believe the attack

Tuesday night was related to drugs, but he had no other details.

State police were sent to patrol the town.

Oaxaca, a Pacific coast state with a picturesque colonial capital, ancient Zapotec ruins and pristine beaches, is considered a drug trafficking corridor, although violence has not risen to the levels plaguing Mexico's northern border region.

The U.S. Consulate in Monterrey on Wednesday warned American citizens to avoid traveling to Nuevo Laredo, across the border from Laredo, Texas, and Reynosa, which faces McAllen.

Mexican security forces have fought gang members in several cities of Tamaulipas state since Sunday, said

Hernan de la Garza, the state deputy attorney general.

Among the 19 dead were a soldier and a police officer, both killed in attacks in two different towns Tuesday.

Gunmen also attacked the police headquarters in the town of Miguel Aleman on Tuesday, de la Garza said. Six officers are missing and presumed kidnapped.

As rumors of shootouts spread, people stayed off the streets and some two dozen schools ended classes early Tuesday in Nuevo Laredo and Matamoros, which lies across from Brownsville, Texas. Reports of fighting spread by e-mail, Twitter and other social network postings.

There were no shootings in either city Tuesday, however. Nuevo Laredo School



Students protest against the visit of Mexico's President Felipe Calderon in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010. Protesters demanded the presidential resignation after a recent massacre that killed 15 teenagers with no known gang ties.

Associated Press

superintendent Aurelio Uvalle said schools did not have permission to close and teachers who failed to show up for classes could face disciplinary measures.

In Guerrero, another Pacific coast state considered a trafficking corridor, police found two severed arms in an icebox Wednesday, along with a threatening message. State police said an anonymous tip led them to the remains in the

town of Ciudad Altamirano.

The massacre in Oaxaca was the second mass killing in Mexico in less than a month. On Jan. 30, gunmen killed 15 people in a working-class neighborhood of Ciudad Juarez, a city facing El Paso, Texas, that has become one of the world's deadliest places. Most of the dead were teenagers at a party with no known ties to drug gangs. □



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Top-level informer affair embarrasses Hamas



In this Nov. 18, 2004 file photo Sheik Hassan Yousef, center, a senior West Bank leader and spokesman of the Islamic militant group Hamas, salutes as he is escorted by Israeli army soldiers out of the Ofer military jail near the West Bank town of Ramallah.

Associated Press

MOHAMMED
DARAGHMEH

Associated Press Writers

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Claims by the son of a Hamas founder Wednesday that he was a long-term spy for Israel exposed a new side of the Islamic militant group's vulnerability and punched a hole in its meticulously groomed image of secrecy and discipline.

The spy affair comes at a time when Hamas is still

reeling from suspicions that Hamas informants helped Israel assassinate a top Hamas operative in a Dubai hotel. The back-to-back scandals were sure to leave Hamas leaders fearful of their own and ever more painfully aware of how capable Israel is of reaching the inner circles of their organization.

At the center of the latest affair is 32-year-old Mosab Yousef, a son of Sheik Hassan Yousef, a Hamas founder serving a six-

year term in an Israeli prison. Hamas, which overran the Gaza Strip in 2007, dismissed the younger Yousef's claims as a lie and said they were part of an Israeli attempt to weaken the movement. However, the man's father did not rule out that his son was an informer, contending he was blackmailed by Israeli agents as a teen.

Analysts said the disclosures hurt Hamas' image and were sure to trigger new security concerns in the movement.

The Israeli Haaretz daily reported Wednesday that Mosab Yousef provided intelligence to Israel's Shin Bet security service for more than a decade, preventing dozens of Hamas attacks against Israelis, including suicide bombings, saving hundreds of lives. The paper said he also helped put several senior Palestinian operatives behind bars.

The younger Yousef, who moved to California in 2007, declined an interview request by The Associated Press.

His memoir, "Son of Hamas," is being published in the United States next week.

His publicist confirmed that the information presented by Haaretz is described in the book.

The author wrote on his Facebook page that his memoir "will blow your minds away, it is going to be like a tsunami in the Middle East."

Mosab Yousef was considered one of the Shin Bet's most valuable assets and was dubbed "The Green Prince," a reference to his Hamas pedigree and the Islamists' signature green color, Haaretz said.

The newspaper said it confirmed Mosab Yousef's account with Shin Bet agents, including his handler. The report said Mosab, who converted to Christianity, despised Hamas and acted out of ideological conviction.

The elder Yousef said in a statement from prison that he did not rule out that his son was recruited by Israeli intelligence, but he had no access to the movement's secrets.

The father said Mosab was first blackmailed by the Israeli agents as a 17-year-old, and others in Hamas were told. The cleric did not say what damaging information Shin Bet might have used against his son.

"Whether what Haaretz reported is true or not, Mosab was not an active member in Hamas or in any of its military, political or religious branches, or any other body," the elder Yousef said in the statement distributed by Hamas.

Mosab Yousef was first jailed by Israel in 1996 and released in 1997.

The Shin Bet routinely tries to recruit Palestinians of all factions as informers, including those in prisons, by using blackmail or promising benefits, such as work or travel permits.

The spy affair comes at a time when Hamas is still smarting from the Jan. 19 assassination in Dubai of Mahmoud al-Mabhouh, suspected by Israel of procuring Iranian arms for Gaza.

On Wednesday, Dubai police said at least 15 more suspects using foreign passports are

wanted for the slaying of the Hamas commander, raising the alleged hit squad tally to at least 26. Several names were traced to Israeli dual nationals, but all denied involvement.

The violent Hamas has been in Israel's sight since its founding in 1987. Israel has killed key Hamas leaders in Gaza, most in airstrikes, though it botched a 1997 attempt to kill Khaled Mashaal, now the movement's supreme leader.

Authorities in Dubai have arrested two Palestinians in the al-Mabhouh slaying. Hamas' Fatah rivals in the West Bank have alleged that Hamas moles helped the killers.

Hamas officials have countered that the Syria-based al-Mabhouh was careless, booking his trip through the Internet and informing his Gaza family of the name of the Dubai hotel where he planned to stay. The family denied al-Mabhouh gave them information.

Hamas also denied media reports that two al-Mabhouh aides in Damascus were sought for questioning about the assassination. Instead, Hamas has alleged that the two Palestinians in custody in Dubai had links to Fatah.

Hamas long prided itself in its secrecy and discipline, in contrast to the fractious, unruly Fatah movement.

However, analysts said that as Hamas grew from a shadowy underground movement into Gaza's ruler, it became more vulnerable to infiltration.

"Hamas is no longer a small organization which is easily controlled by any leadership," said Khaled Hroub, a Hamas expert at Cambridge University.

The al-Mabhouh assassination undermined Hamas' image as a coherent, organized group, and the exposure of Mosab Yousef as an informer was even more damaging, he added.

"There have been a number of stories of having some collaborators on the margins and fringes (of Hamas), but not the son of a leader," he said. "It will leave a stain on Hamas' image." □

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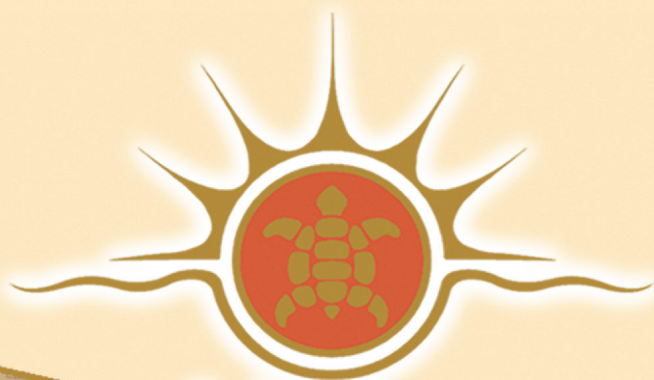
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Argentina presses for UN help in Falklands dispute

MICHAEL WARREN

Associated Press Writer

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Argentina's foreign minister asked the head of the United Nations on Wednesday to help resolve a dispute with Britain over a vast swath of the southern Atlantic Ocean where Britain has begun drilling for oil.

Following a meeting with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at U.N. headquarters, Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana told reporters Ban was not happy tensions have worsened because of Britain's decision to start drilling and was willing to continue his "good offices" mission.

A statement issued later by Ban's office said the secretary-general "took note of Argentina's concerns" in the meeting with Taiana.

"The secretary-general expressed satisfaction at Argentina's commitment to resolving its dispute with the United Kingdom over the islands in a peaceful manner," the statement added. "He reiterated that his good offices are available when requested by all parties in a dispute."

The U.N. General Assembly called for Argentina

and Britain to negotiate sovereignty over the islands following a brief 1982 war for control, which Britain won.

Britain has ruled out any concessions involving the islands that its people have occupied since the early 1800s.

"As British ministers have made clear, the UK has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the Sandwich Islands," British Ambassador Mark Lyall Grant said in a statement.

"This position is underpinned by the principle of self-determination as set out in the U.N. Charter. We are also clear that the Falkland Islands government is entitled to develop a hydrocarbons industry within its waters, and we support this legitimate business in Falklands' territory."

Taiana called Britain's oil-drilling operation "an illegal act that goes against international law and against express U.N. resolutions asking that neither side take unilateral actions that could aggravate the situation."

The foreign minister reiterated Argentina's position that the islands are part of the South

American country's territory and that the islands' residents, who strongly favor retaining ties to Britain, do not have the unilateral right to decide what they want the islands to be.

The issue heated up this week when Argentine President Cristina Fernandez protested the start of British oil drilling near the Falklands, calling it "robbery." She had already imposed restrictions on ships that pass through seas near the islands — but Britain told its ship captains to ignore them.

Argentina's call for negotiations won support this week at a summit of every country in the Western Hemisphere save the U.S. and Canada. The leaders meeting in Mexico backed "the legitimate rights of the Argentine Republic," but stopped short of directly endorsing its claim to sovereignty. Their resolution also did not specifically mention oil drilling.

Brazilian President Inacio Lula da Silva criticized the United Nations for not pushing more forcefully to reopen the Falklands debate. "What is the geographic, the political or economic explanation for England to



Falklands war veterans, one holding up a sign that reads in Spanish "The islands are Argentine," referring to the Falklands islands, demonstrate in front of the National Congress in Buenos Aires, Wednesday Feb. 24, 2010.

be in Las Malvinas?" Silva asked, using Argentina's name for the islands. "Could it be because England is a permanent member of the U.N.'s Security Council (where) they can do everything and the others nothing?"

U.S. State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said Tuesday that Washington is "neutral on the question of sovereignty" but supports "good-faith dialogue between those two countries."

But people in the Falklands say Argentina is engaging in its own form of colonialism. Jan Cheek, a member of the islands' local legislative

assembly, said Argentina's demand for sovereignty talks ignores the self-determination rights of islanders, who clearly want to be British.

"It seems to many of us that Argentina is indulging in a little latter-day colonialism in ignoring our right to self-determination and seeking to make us a colony of Argentina," Cheek told The Associated Press.

Taiana said Argentina will not back down in its fight for the islands. "We will bring this permanent claim of the government and Argentine people to the most diverse forums possible," he said. □



FILE - In this Sept. 16, 2009 file photo, Jennifer Lopez attends a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington to discuss education in the Latino community.

(AP Photo/Haraz N. Ghanbari, file)

Jennifer Lopez announces split from Sony

NEW YORK — Jennifer Lopez is off of Sony's block.

The singing and acting diva has confirmed she has split from Sony Music after more than a decade. Sony's Epic Records put out her first CD, "On The 6," in 1999. Since then, she's sold millions, but also had a couple of CDs with disappointing sales.

A new album called "Love?" was due to be released by the label this spring. But in a statement released Tuesday night, Lopez said: "At this point, I have fulfilled all my contractual obligations to Sony/Epic (and) we have come to an amicable decision."

Lopez says she has a new label home and her album will be out in the summer, but she did not specify the label. □



FILE - In this Dec. 3, 2009 file photo, Adrian Pasdar attends the premiere of 'Everybody's Fine' in New York.

(AP Photo/Peter Kramer, file)

Clay Aiken takes NC stage for gay rights

RALEIGH, N.C. — More than a year after disclosing he is gay, Clay Aiken is speaking before a gay-rights event in his hometown.

Aiken will deliver a speech about gay rights this weekend at the Human Rights Campaign Carolinas gala in Raleigh, The News & Observer of Raleigh reported Wednesday. Actress Meredith Baxter, who recently said she is a lesbian, also will deliver a speech.

The 31-year-old Raleigh native, pop singer and 2003 "American Idol" runner-up said he wrote his own speech after remarks provided for him proved too political, including a slam aimed at former President George W. Bush.

"I don't feel like this is the place to be horribly politically charged and bash people and talk about the wrongs that have been done," he said. "My goal is to be hopeful, that it's time for everyone to have equal rights."

Aiken says his goal is to urge Americans to support equal rights for all. He says that means allowing homosexuals to marry and enjoy rights that heterosexual couples take for granted like inheritance and hospital visitation. Aiken said that goal may take decades.

"It's more important to me, as a parent, that my son have all the rights — if he's gay — than it is for me. I don't want to do anything today that's going to inhibit, or be a detriment to,



FILE - In this March 28, 2009 file photo, singer Clay Aiken attends the 20th Annual Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) Media Awards in New York.

(AP Photo/Evan Agostini, file)

"Scrubs" star signs on for sci-fi thriller

By Borys

LOS ANGELES (Hollywood Reporter) — Eric Balfour and "Scrubs" veteran Donald Faison are starring in "Skyline," a sci-fi thriller that has started shooting in Los Angeles. The story takes place in a Los Angeles high-rise where a small group of survivors brave a mysterious attack of otherworldly origins. Faison is playing an entrepreneur who lures his longtime friend (Balfour) to the West Coast. After a night of partying, both wake to find a strange force is swallowing

his rights," he said.

Aiken's son, Parker, was conceived via in vitro fertilization and born in August 2008. Parker's mother is music producer Jaymes Foster. Foster, who lives in California and Aiken, who lives in the Raleigh area, share custody.

Aiken said he would probably attend Saturday's event with his bodyguard and without family members or friends. Some family members have handled news of Aiken's homosexuality better than others, he said.

"Some Southern families like to sweep things under the rug," he said. "We just don't talk about it." □



Actor Eric Balfour poses at the opening of the Dolce & Gabbana flagship boutique in Los Angeles December 15, 2008, benefiting the Art of Elysium, a non-profit organization bringing creative projects to children who are battling serious medical conditions.

REUTERS/Fred Prouser

humanity off the face of the earth. The project is being directed and produced by visual effects artists Greg and Colin Strause, whose credits include "Avatar" and "300." Balfour has appeared in genre movies such as "Hell Ride," "The Horsemen" and "The Spirit." □



Recording artist Patti LaBelle poses for a portrait Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010 in New York.

(AP Photo/Jeff Christensen)

Patti LaBelle: Some 'Idol' judges aren't qualified

By MESFIN FEKADU, Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — Patti LaBelle thinks some people shouldn't be on "American Idol" — and she's not talking about the contestants.

"Some of the judges, I don't think they're qualified to even judge," she said in an interview Wednesday.

The veteran R&B diva wouldn't say which judge she thought was lacking on the hit Fox show, which has Simon Cowell, Randy Jackson, Kara DioGuardi and Ellen DeGeneres picking America's top singers. Tuesday's "Idol" episode saw 12 female semifinalists competing during "Hollywood Week."

LaBelle said she was asked to be a judge on the series before Paula Abdul; a rep for the show had no comment on whether she was. LaBelle feels like the judges' comments to the contestants are too mean.

"The comments that were made, they could make you like wanna kill yourself," the 65-year-old singer said.

LaBelle's advice to singing hopefuls: "If you believe in yourself, just go for it. What do you have to lose? And when people tell you 'You can't,' you have to say, 'I can.'" □

Adrian Pasdar pleads not guilty to drunk driving

LOS ANGELES — Adrian Pasdar has pleaded not guilty to a misdemeanor drunken driving charge.

The "Heroes" actor entered the plea through his attorney and did not attend a court hearing on Wednesday. His case is scheduled for a pretrial hearing on March 15.

Pasdar was arrested Jan. 27 after authorities say they

spotted the 44-year-old swerving and speeding on a Los Angeles freeway.

Pasdar plays Nathan Petrelli on the NBC show "Heroes." He is married to Dixie Chicks singer Natalie Maines.

A phone message left for Pasdar's attorney, Michael Nasatir, was not immediately returned Wednesday. □

BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

Stocks rebound as Bernanke sees rates staying low



Trader Peter Tuchman, left, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010.

By TIM PARADIS
and IEVA M. AUGSTUMS,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK — Stocks rebounded from a two-day slide Wednesday as Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke told Congress that low interest rates are still needed to support the economy.

Bernanke sounded an upbeat note about a recovery as part of his regular semi-annual report to Congress on the economy. He told the House Financial Services Committee he still expects interest rates will remain low for an extended period. Investors want to see low-cost borrowing continue to help revive the economy. Financial stocks helped pull the Dow Jones industrial average up 95 points after the index slid 101 on Tuesday. Meanwhile, the technology-heavy Nasdaq composite index rose after software

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

company Autodesk Inc. reported stronger earnings and revenue than expected.

At the same time, a disappointing report on new home sales brought the latest reminder that a recovery in the economy will be difficult even with government aid.

The Commerce Department said sales of new homes fell to a record low in January. Economists expected an increase. The government said that new home sales fell 11.2 percent last month to a seasonally adjusted annual sales rate of 309,000 units. That's the lowest level on a record that goes back nearly 50 years. It was the third straight monthly drop.

Housing has been a big concern for investors who this week have been worrying about consumer spending. A surprising drop in consumer confidence reminded investors of the fragility of the

economic recovery and sent stocks sliding on Tuesday. The market also posted modest losses on Monday.

For more than a year, investors have been looking to answer the question of how soon the economy will be in a sustained recovery. Bernanke's testimony brought calm to the market but another batch of worrisome economic numbers would likely send investors running again. That has been their pattern for months. John Merrill, chief investment officer at Tanglewood Wealth Management in Houston, said Bernanke's remarks didn't offer anything new for investors but that even another reassurance that rates will remain low for now helped boost traders' spirits.

"The market has these mood swings," he said, noting that only weeks ago investors sold stocks on what appeared to be good news. "Sometimes the market is in the mood to take everything positively."

In midafternoon trading, the Dow rose 95.76, or 0.9 percent, to 10,378.17. The broader Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 10.55, or 1 percent, to 1,105.15, and the Nasdaq composite index rose 25.84, or 1.2 percent, to 2,239.28.

Bond prices mostly fell, pushing yields higher. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note was unchanged at 3.69 percent from late Tuesday.

The dollar fell against other major currencies following Bernanke's remarks because low interest rates make the currency a less attractive investment.

The drop in the dollar lifted prices of commodities, which become cheaper for foreign buyers when the dollar falls.

The gain in commodity prices, in turn, lifted energy stocks. Crude oil rose 73 cents to \$79.59 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Gold prices fell.

Investors keep watch over interest rates because low-cost cash has been one of the biggest drivers of the stock market's rebound since March 2009. By keeping rates low, the Fed makes it cheaper for businesses and consumers to borrow and help stimulate the economy. If it holds rates too low for too long, however, the Fed risks sparking inflation. Bernanke's testimony follows the central bank's move last week to boost the rate it charges banks for short-term loans. The increase had been expected, though investors were initially concerned that it signaled that the Fed would soon start raising other rates. Financial stocks rose after Bernanke signaled that interest rates would remain low. JPMorgan Chase & Co.

rose 97 cents, or 2.4 percent, to \$40.85, while Bank of America Corp. advanced 35 cents, or 2.2 percent, to \$16.29. The stocks were the biggest advancers among the 30 that make up the Dow industrials.

Tech stocks rose after Autodesk's results. The stock rose \$2.64, or 10.3 percent, to \$28.30.

Among energy stocks, Exxon Mobil Corp. rose 73 cents, or 1.1 percent, to \$65.67.

More than two stocks rose for every one that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 491.5 million shares, compared with 524.9 million shares traded at the same point Tuesday.

The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies rose 6.20, or 1 percent, to 631.27.

Britain's FTSE 100 rose 0.5 percent, Germany's DAX index and France's CAC-40 each rose 0.2 percent. Japan's Nikkei stock average fell 1.5 percent. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

PhilaU's Magee wins No. 903

By DAN GELSTON,
AP Basketball Writer
PHILADELPHIA

Philadelphia University coach Herb Magee got his 903rd career victory, moving past Hall of Famer Bob Knight to become the winningest men's coach in NCAA history.

The 68-year-old Magee got the record with a 76-65 victory over Goldey-Beacom College on Tuesday night. Magee has won all 903 games over a 43-year career with the tiny Division II Rams.

Knight won 902 games and three national championships in a 42-year career with Army, Indiana and Texas Tech. Northern State coach Don Meyer, who announced his retirement Monday, has 922 victories between the NAIA and NCAA.

Earlier this season, McKendree University coach Harry Statham notched his 1000th win at the NAIA powerhouse. The only other member of the 1,000-win club is Tennessee women's coach Pat Summitt.

Magee led the program to a national championship in 1970.

Fans started bellowing "903! 903!" over the final minutes and students stormed the court in celebration.

"When the game started, you could see the enthusiasm and I'm sure these guys felt it," Magee said. "I think every student in school was here, along with the faculty and administration. It was amazing, just amazing."

Villanova coach Jay Wright and Saint Joseph's athletic director Don DiJulia were



among the representatives from the six D-I city schools there to support Magee. Wright almost played for Magee before deciding to play for Bucknell. Magee has forged a reputation as "Shot Doc" and his flawless jumper has made him a must-have guest for any area summer camp. He has earned the respect of his peers — from Wright to Saint Joe's Phil Martelli to Temple's Fran Dunphy — all without leaving the private university of 3,350 students.

Magee ended his playing career with the Rams (then known as Philadelphia Textile) as the school's leading scorer with 2,235 points. He averaged 29.1 points one season and was a two-time small-college All-America selection.

Magee has spent 50 years at the school.

He bypassed a tryout with the Boston Celtics after they picked him in the 1963 draft and Magee says he's turned down several lucrative offers at the D-I level and NBA assistant ranks.

He stayed for this moment. Fans set free hundreds of balloons from each corner

of the second level of the gym, and streamers and confetti were tossed onto the court.

Magee went into the stands to shake hands and hug family and friends. He was introduced as "the man who should be in the Hall of Fame" before saying a few words to the standing-room only crowd of 2,500.

"This is a wonderful, wonderful night," Magee said. "Thanks for all your support."

There were 50 media credential requests — 48 more than for a usual non-milestone home game. The fans came dressed in maroon, mostly wearing T-shirts with "Magee" on the back.

The Rams (23-6, 15-1 Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference) opened on a 14-0 run and No. 903 seemed tantalizingly close only a few minutes into the game. They won their 14th straight game — a number Magee was more proud of than 903.

"I knew we'd have a good team because we have good players," Magee said.

Russell Frederick led the Rams with 24 points. □



New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter smiles as he addresses a tent full of media during baseball spring training at Steinbrenner Field in Tampa, Fla., Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010.

Associated Press

Jeter not interested in becoming a free agent

FRED GOODALL
AP Baseball Writer

TAMPA, Florida (AP) — Derek Jeter reiterated what every Yankees fan wanted to hear: He hopes to play in pinstripes forever.

He just doesn't want to spend time talking about his future in New York.

"I've said from Day One, this is the only organization I've ever wanted to play for, and that's still true today," Jeter said Wednesday before the team's first full-squad gathering at George M. Steinbrenner Field.

"I was a Yankees fan growing up. This is where I want to be. I've never envisioned myself playing anywhere else, and hopefully I don't have to," he said.

The 35-year-old Jeter is entering the final season of a \$189 million, 10-year deal. The All-Star shortstop said he doesn't have a set number of years in mind that he'd like to continue playing and steered around a question about whether he has a desire to be the Yankees' highest-paid player.

Jeter hit .334 with 18 homers and 66 RBIs in 2009, leading New York to its first World Series championship in nine years. The Yankees have won five titles during his career.

"To be honest with you, I never put limitations on how long I can play. I want to play as long as I can, as long as I'm having fun, as long as I can be productive," Jeter said. "This organization prides itself on winning and putting a competitive team on the field. As long as I can help out, that's as long as I want to play."

Jeter said his status won't become a distraction because he's not going to speak publicly on the matter again until after the season ends.

"I think it's unfair to be talking about myself when we're trying to win. That's the approach I've always had. That's not going to change," he said.

"I know it's maybe going to cause a lot of speculation. There may be a few stories out there, but it won't be a distraction because I won't be talking about it." □

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NBA Roundup

Cavaliers get overdue win, down Hornets

CLEVELAND (AP) — The Cleveland Cavaliers returned to winning ways after a rare three-game losing skid, beating the New Orleans Hornets 105-95 in the NBA on Tuesday.

LeBron James had 20 points and 12 assists, and Antawn Jamison scored 18 points in his first start for Cleveland, which stayed half a game ahead of the Los Angeles Lakers in the fight over the NBA's best record.

James closed out the win in the final two minutes, hitting a 3-pointer and finishing a three-point play to allow the Cavaliers to escape a huge night from New Orleans' rookies: Marcus Thornton and Darren Collison combined for 59 points, including a franchise-record 23 from Thornton in the second quarter.

Thornton scored a career-high 37 off the bench, igniting a 40-point second quarter for the Hornets by making his first five shots and 10 of 13 in the quarter.

Lakers 99, Grizzlies 98

In Memphis, Tennessee, Kobe Bryant returned from five games out with an ankle injury and hit a 3-pointer with 4.3 seconds left to lift Los Angeles over Memphis. Bryant led the Lakers with 32 points, including his team's final nine points. His 3-pointer with 54 seconds left tied the game.

Pau Gasol added 22 points and 13 rebounds for the

Lakers, who won for the seventh time in their past eight road games.

The Grizzlies, who lost their fifth straight home game, were led by O.J. Mayo's 25 points.

Suns 104, Thunder 102

In Oklahoma City, Jason Richardson connected on a floater from the foul line with 0.7 seconds left to complete Phoenix's rally from a 10-point deficit to edge Oklahoma City.

Amare Stoudemire scored 30 points and Richardson had his first double-double of the season with 20 points and 13 rebounds for the Suns, who were down 10 with 3-1/2 minutes to play.

Kevin Durant scored 36 points for the Thunder, whose nine-game winning streak came to an end.

Phoenix moved past the Thunder into fifth place in the Western Conference.

Celtics 110, Knicks 106

In Boston, Rajon Rondo scored 15 points and had 16 assists to lead Boston over New York.

Ray Allen added 24 points as the Celtics sent the Knicks to their eighth straight loss.

David Lee had 28 points and 15 rebounds for New York.

Timberwolves 91, Heat 88

In Miami, Minnesota took advantage of Dwyane Wade's absence for a rare road victory over Miami.

Kevin Love had 17 points and 12 rebounds and Jonny Flynn added 16 points for the

Timberwolves, who snapped a six-game losing streak.

Dorell Wright had a career-high 26 points off the bench to lead the Heat, who played their third straight game without Wade, the All-Star MVP who is nursing a calf strain.

Pistons 101, Kings 89

In Sacramento, California, Detroit pulled away in the third quarter to defeat struggling Sacramento.

After taking a 12-point lead in halftime, Hamilton keyed a third-quarter effort that hiked the Pistons' advantage to 30 at one point. Hamilton finished with 30 points.

Tyreke Evans had 28 points and a career-high 13 assists for the Kings, who have dropped five straight since the All-Star break.

Trail Blazers 102, Nets 93

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Portland avoided blowing a big lead for a second straight game by holding off New Jersey.

Brandon Roy scored 10 of his 28 points in the fourth quarter and LaMarcus Aldridge added 27 points as the Blazers learned the lessons of squandering a 25-point lead in Sunday's loss to Utah.

Courtney Lee and Devin Harris led the Nets with 28 points apiece. The total matched Lee's career high set earlier this season and was a season high for Harris.

In Oakland, California, Lou Williams scored 26 points,



Cleveland Cavaliers forward Antawn Jamison, top, dunks the ball against New Orleans Hornets forward David West (30) in the third quarter of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2010, in Cleveland. The Cavaliers won 105-95.

Associated Press

including a clinching 3-pointer with 14.5 seconds left, as Philadelphia downed Golden State.

Williams matched his career high with five 3-pointers and had 10 rebounds and seven assists, while Andre Iguodala added 22 points and seven assists, as the Sixers won in their first game since guard Allen Iverson took an indefinite leave of absence to be with his ill daughter.

Philadelphia led by 17 going into the fourth quarter but had to withstand a late flurry from Golden State.

Monta Ellis had 22 points for the Warriors, who pulled within 105-102 with 39 seconds remaining. A Williams 3-pointer and two free throws sealed it for the Sixers.

In other NBA games it was, Cleveland 105, New Orleans 95; Boston 110, New York 106; Minnesota 91, Miami 88; Portland 102, New Jersey 93; L.A. Lakers 99, Memphis 98; Phoenix 104, Oklahoma City 102; Detroit 101, Sacramento 89; and Philadelphia 110, Golden State 102. □

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Serbia's Janko Tipsarevic reacts after winning his match against Britain's Andy Murray during the third day of the Emirates Dubai ATP Tennis Championships in Dubai, United Arab Emirates Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010.

Associated Press

Murray ousted by Tipsarevic in Dubai

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Andy Murray's first tournament since reaching the Australian Open final was ended in the second round of the Dubai Championships by Janko Tipsarevic of Serbia 7-6 (3), 4-6, 6-4 on Wednesday.

Tipsarevic evened his record at 3-3 against Murray, who's never had an easy time with the Serb. Tipsarevic rated this latest win highly. "One of the biggest wins, surely," he said. "For me, Murray is a contestant to be No. 1 at the end of the season. He played unbelievable tennis at the Australian Open. He was one of the favorites to win the tournament here, for sure."

Murray, who converted only three of 12 break chances, begged to differ.

"It is always disappointing to lose, but I did not have much expectation from the tournament," Murray said.

"I am coming from a big break after the Australian Open and was not as prepared as I should have been for the tournament. I was still trying out things on the court, rather than playing my normal game."

By the end of the round, only three seeds made the last eight after No. 5 Jo-Wilfried Tsonga succumbed to Ivan Ljubicic 7-5, 6-3.

Tipsarevic, who hadn't won on tour this year until this week, served for the match at 5-3 in the third set but was broken by Murray's stunning double-fisted backhand passing shot on the run. However, Tipsarevic then broke Murray a third time to seal the match after 2 hours, 30 minutes.

"Andy is one of the best when it comes to return of serves. I kind of expected that my serve will be broken," Tipsarevic said. "I just told myself that I have to remain calm and composed and take my chances when they come. And I am glad I did just that."

The pair hit 13 aces each but Murray landed in only just more than half of his first serves, and Tipsarevic took three of his four break chances.

"I came here with fever and being completely sick, but I'm feeling better with each passing day," Tipsarevic said.

"Last night, I ate two big heads of white garlic, because Novak (Djokovic) told me I'm going

to feel better. Actually, I did."

Djokovic admitted to feeling fortunate to get past Serbian countryman Viktor Troicki 3-6, 6-4, 6-2 to reach the quarterfinals.

Djokovic felt the heat from Troicki and the 34-degree (93 F) temperature until midway through the second set when the growing shade across the court helped to slow down the balls to Djokovic's liking.

Up a set and 3-3 in the second, Troicki missed game point and Djokovic took over, winning in 2 hours, 6 minutes.

"I wasn't happy with the performance overall. But I won, that's what matters," he said.

"He was a better player for a set and a half. I think this is one of the rare tournaments that you really feel (a) big, big difference between the day match and night match. The balls go really much faster, and as soon as the shade came on the court, I felt more control over my game."

Fourth-seeded Nikolay Davydenko retired after losing the first set 6-3 to Michael Berrer of Germany because of the left wrist he injured at Rotterdam two weekends ago.

"It's disappointing for me because I didn't recover fast enough," said Davydenko, who was doubtful for Russia's Davis Cup team next week.

Marin Cilic came back from 6-3 down in the tiebreaker to beat Austrian qualifier Stefan Koubek 6-2, 7-6 (6) and improve his ATP Tour-best record to 17-1 this season.

Sixth-seeded Cilic and Koubek broke each other three times in the second set and Koubek, who'd won their only previous match four years ago, led 5-1 in the tiebreak.

"It was nice not to play (a) third set," Cilic said. He will meet another Austrian in the quarterfinals after Jurgen Melzer beat Tommy Robredo of Spain 6-3, 7-5.

Seventh-seeded Michael Youzhny won 7-6 (2), 6-4 against Bjorn Phau of Germany, and Marcos Baghdatis defeated Indian qualifier Somdev Devvarman 6-3, 3-6 6-1.

Ljubicic fired 15 aces past Tsonga to make the Dubai quarterfinals for the fifth time. The 2005 finalist will meet Djokovic on Thursday. The other matchups are: Baghdatis vs. Berrer, and Youzhny vs. Tipsarevic. □

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Goergl leads after first Olympic Giant Slalom run

CHRIS LEHOURITES

AP Sports Writer

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Weather problems returned to the Vancouver Olympics on Wednesday, with dense fog forcing the second run of the women's giant slalom to be postponed.

The first run, which was led by Elisabeth Goergl of Austria, was raced in fog and snow. The second run never even started despite several delays, and organizers eventually called it off and rescheduled it for Thursday.

Sweden won the men's cross-country skiing relay, with Marcus Hellner pulling away on the last leg for his second gold medal of the Olympics. Hellner was joined by Daniel Richardsson, Johan Olsson and Anders Soedergren. The Swedes won the 4x10-kilometer race in 1 hour, 45 minutes, 5.4 seconds.

"It was wonderful, getting to parade into the finish," Hellnersaid. "It's something we've all dreamed about doing. It's perfect. We couldn't ask for anything more."

Petter Northug used a furious final leg to secure silver for Norway. The Czech Republic took bronze.

Also, Martina Sablikova of the Czech Republic earned her second gold of the Vancouver Games, winning the women's 5,000-meter



Julia Mancuso of the United States, right, skis to Lindsey Vonn after her first run of the Women's giant slalom was stopped at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics in Whistler, British Columbia, Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010. Mancuso had to halt her first run after Lindsey Vonn crashed. Mancuso was taken back up the course and started in a later slot.

speedskating race.

"I have two golds," Sablikova said. "The Olympic Games was wunderbar."

There were three other medals to be awarded Wednesday, in women's bobsled, women's aerials and the women's 3,000-meter short track speedskating relay.

In the men's ice hockey quarterfinals, the United States beat Switzerland 2-0. Later, host Canada was to face Russia, defending Olympic champion Sweden was to play Slovakia and Finland was to take on the Czech Republic.

The Netherlands pulled out of the men's four-man bobsled competition because the team's driver

told coaches he has lost his confidence.

Edwin van Calker decided to drop out of the field because of a build up of "numerous factors," including his near crash in the two-man event, the death of a Georgian luger in a training crash and "external family pressures," coach Tom de la Hunty said.

Sven Kramer, the Dutch speedskater who was disqualified from the 10,000 after skating in the wrong lane, said he will stick with coach Gerard Kemkers despite the coaching

blunder that cost him the gold medal.

Kramer said Kemkers had been instrumental in leading him to the gold in the 5,000 and also has helped him win several European and world titles over the past five years.

"The past years were simply too good to drop someone just like that," Kramer said. On Tuesday, Kemkers sent Kramer into the wrong lane about halfway through the race, a rare mistake that cost the Dutchman an almost certain gold.

In the women's giant slalom,

downhill bronze medalist Goergl finished ahead of second-place Taina Barioz of France and third-place Kathrin Zettel of Austria.

Other contenders for gold included Eva-Maria Brem of Austria in fourth, Tina Maze of Slovenia in fifth and German standout Maria Riesch in seventh.

Defending champion Julia Mancuso finished 18th after having to re-start her run following the crash of American teammate Lindsey Vonn.

Vonn won gold in the downhill and bronze in the super-G, but she lost control in the giant slalom and crashed into the safety netting.

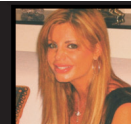
"The course is breaking up at the bottom," Vonn said, who broke the little finger on her right hand in the crash. "I got a little bit too inside and lost my outside ski. My knee came up and hit my chin."

Mancuso, who followed Vonn out of the starting house, had to stop midway through her run because Vonn was still on the side of the course being treated. The defending Olympic champion then had to make her way back up to the top of the course for a later start. □

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NFL hopes to test for HGH; MLB talks with union

RONALD BLUM

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The NFL hopes to start testing players for human growth hormone, and Major League Baseball has started talks with its union to investigate the test that led to the suspension of a British rugby player.

NFL spokesman Greg Aiello said Wednesday that the league had made a proposal to its players in January regarding HGH. Discussions are ongoing, he said. "Our position is that HGH testing has advanced to the point where we are taking steps to incorporate it into our program," Aiello said. "We have proposed it to the union."

The NFLPA's player development director, Stacy Robinson, said in a statement that the union "has supported research to find a suitable test that will detect sustained HGH use." "We believe in and collectively bargained for a system that supports



St. Louis Cardinals hitting coach Mark McGwire stands inside a batting cage as he works with Cardinals players during spring training baseball Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010, in Jupiter, Fla.

Associated Press

the testing of all banned substances," he said.

The NFL has used preseason blood tests since at least 2006 for cholesterol and tryglycerates. Baseball has had urine testing since 2003 but not blood testing.

"We have previously said that if a scientifically validated blood test for

HGH is available, we would consider its utilization," new baseball players' association head Michael Weiner said. "But a single uncontested positive does not scientifically validate a test. There remains debate in the testing community about the scientific validity of this test."

The issue of HGH testing has gained renewed interest in the wake of the United Kingdom Anti-Doping authority announcing a two-year ban Monday for rugby player Terry Newton, saying he had tested positive and become the first athlete suspended for using HGH. The substance is believed by some to hasten healing but there is still a debate over whether it increases strength.

A blood test for HGH has been in existence since the 2004 Athens Olympics and available in the U.S. since 2008, according to United States Anti-Doping Agency executive director Travis Tygart.

Tygart said the test was available to professional leagues, but only through World Anti-Doping Agency labs.

"It's one that's been well-vetted, well-discussed," he said by telephone from London. "Further

research has been done to get it to a point where it's scientifically valid, and we're happy to help any entity that's interested in having an effective test, whether we're involved with their program or not, getting them comfortable with the validity of the science."

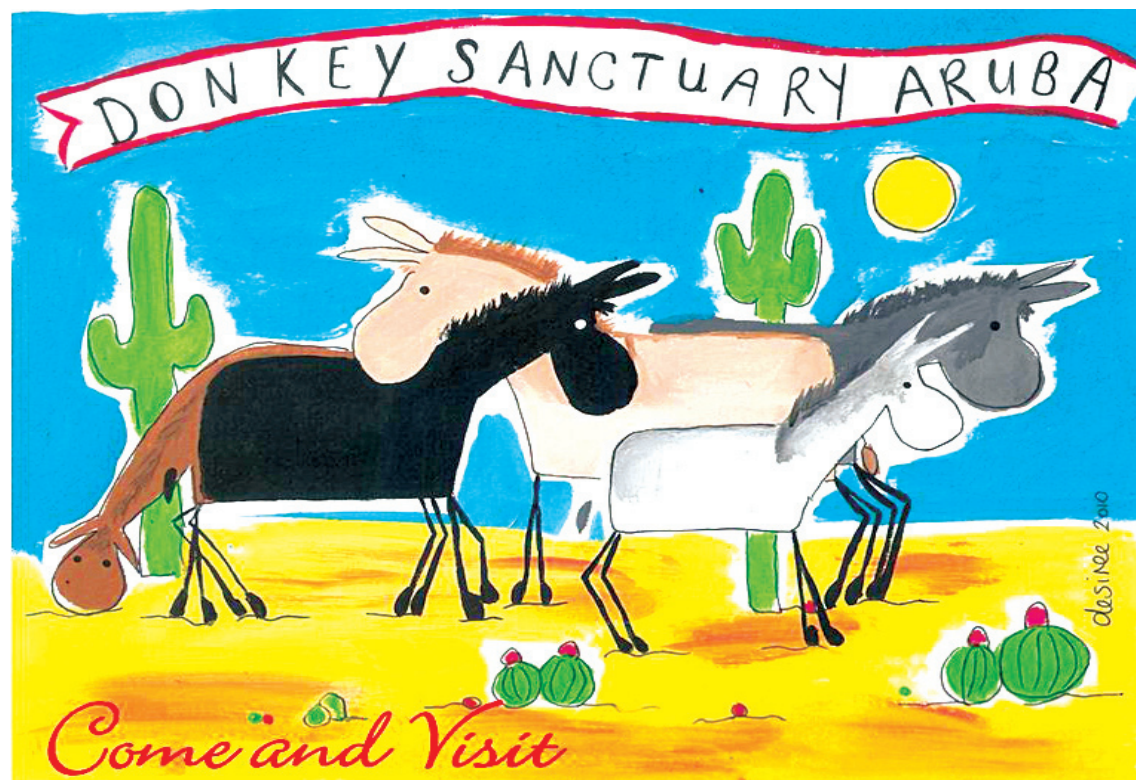
While MLB can institute blood tests for players on minor league rosters, it must reach an agreement with the players' association to start blood testing for unionized players on 40-man big league rosters.

"We are well aware of the important news with respect to the HGH blood test in England," Major League Baseball said in a statement. "We are consulting with our experts concerning immediate steps for our minor league drug program and next steps for our major league drug program. The commissioner remains committed to the position that we must act aggressively to deal with the issue of HGH."

Tygart said the window for detecting HGH through the test is three days at the most, making it most useful for out-of-competition testing. According to Weiner, it may be even shorter.

"Even those who vouch for the science behind the test acknowledge that it can detect use only for a day or so prior to collection," he said.

Baseball began random urine testing for players on minor league rosters in 2001 and reached an agreement the following year to start testing unionized major leaguers. □



Inaugural Aruba International Film festival to honour Richard Gere



By Jeremy Kay

Richard Gere will open the inaugural Aruba International Film Festival (AIFF) as its official host when the Caribbean festival gets underway on June 4.

AIFF artistic director Claudio Masenza and festival founders and producers Giuseppe Cioccarelli and Jonathan Vieira, in Los Angeles to host a private event announcing the festival, added that Gere will receive a special humanitarian award and participate in the "In Conversations With" series

"Richard Gere is a man whose amazing career is matched only by his remarkable and ongoing humanitarian pursuits," Masenza said. "On screen, and off, Richard has an iconic presence and is revered around the world. We are both honored and excited to have him attend the first Aruba International Film Festival and take such an active role in the event."

The festival runs from June 4-11 and will feature premieres, a programming roster of studio and independent fare, workshops, master classes, and on-stage discussions. The mission is "to encourage, educate and activate young Aruban film-makers."

Further details such as the official line-up and celebrity attendance will be announced in the coming weeks. □

Dutch elections set for June as queen names caretaker government

Are clouds on the horizon for future government coalitions in the Netherlands?

THE HAGUE - Queen Beatrix has set a June 9 date for new general elections in the Netherlands, according to a government statement issued Tuesday. She also has appointed several new ministers to replace the 12 Labor party members who resigned after their coalition with the Christian Democrats collapsed on Saturday.

The government collapsed after the Labor members refused to support a request to extend the Netherlands' troop presence in Afghanistan.

Members of the Christian Democrats and the Christian Union will form a caretaker government to carry out basic decision-making until a new cabinet can be sworn in.

Caretaker Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende said he would work with parliament to identify which issues should be classified as "controversial," meaning they wouldn't be taken up until after the elections.

New ministers, new coalitions

Among the queen's first appointments was Jan Kees de Jager as finance minister. De Jager will have the task of preparing an austerity budget, continuing to track down tax cheats, and making a deal with Iceland regarding repayment of funds paid out to Dutch customers who lost money in Icelandic banks.

The collapse of the coalition has put into question which parties will form the next government. One Labor Party leader, Frans Timmermans, drew criticism on Tuesday after saying that his party would never form a coalition



Queen Beatrix

with the far-right Freedom Party of Geert Wilders.

"The Labor party stands for a completely different Holland than the party of Wilders, and for that reason we cannot be in a government with him," a Labor spokeswoman said. "He [Timmermans] dared other parties to think the same thing. Do they want to be in a government that segregates people by race and religion?" Christian Democrat party chairman Pieter van Geel described Timmermans' comments as foolish, while the leader of the socialist SP, Agnes Kant, said they were "undemocratic."

Others expressed fears that Timmermans' tactics could backfire and push more voters

to Wilders' party, which did well in recent opinion polls. His party is already the second largest Dutch party in the European Parliament.

Wilders himself referred to Timmermans' calls as "arrogant" and told Dutch media "the voter will seek punishment for this." □



Jan Peter Balkenende will remain in a limited power role as caretaker prime minister

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is for each restaurant / store/ shop that participate to present and sell their upcoming products/menu for a certain holiday or celebration. For this month the festival is tonight and there will be a DJ and live

music for people to enjoy. Aruba Wine and Dine will be having 14 booths put on The Village square. Each booth has their own light. There will be a DJ (DJ Big Rig) and a live band (3-Som). The event will be

working with coins and a cashier. Each coin will be worth Afl. 2,50. At the end of the night each booth can come an exchange their coins into cash.

Participants include: MooMba Beach, Hadicurari, Salt & Pepper, Tango, Fishes and More, Sopranos, Cactus Jack, Chino Latino, Mambo Jambo, Café the Plaza, Cuban Cigars, Le Gourmet and Pepia Est (wines). □

~ Photos by Julia Renfro ~



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As Timothy was busy painting a butterfly on Marlies' cheek, her parents checked out Churromania. Churros have become an internationally famous treat and Marlies enjoyed her churro after her butterfly was finished. Next in line was Gerald, who opted for black,



intriguing Chinese characters on his face. Gerald's brothers and parents walked around in the meantime, debating whether they would go for the Argentinian grill Beef?Es, Chubby Panda, Asian food, or Sciue Sciue, Italian finger food and fresh pasta. Plaza Food Court also features superb chicken at Bon Chicken, Shoarma Express for shoarma and falafel and American Burger with succulent Angus beef and veggie burgers. For young Brian the evening could not be better: he was



transformed into a dragon, complete with fire and smoke coming out of his mouth.

outwww.palmbeachplaza.com or www.facebook.com/palmbeach plaza.

The Plaza Food Court at Palm Beach Plaza is open from noon until 3 pm and from 6 to 10 pm; the mall itself is open from 2 pm until 10 pm. For more information you can check

And before you start making plans for next weekend: remember that there will be a balloon event of the popular Party Animals on Saturday, starting at 2 pm until 7 pm. □

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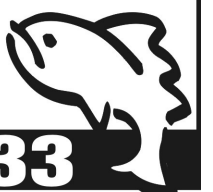
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CURACAO - On February 12th 35 people from the U.S. Forward Operating Location (USFOL) in Curacao went out into the community to share the perfect Valentine's Day gift for those in need. Two projects encompassing 230 volunteer hours and 2017 NAF worth of supplies and materials were going on simultaneously on this special day.

The first location was in Fuik where a large group gathered to completely paint the roof of the Funashon Amigunan di Cristo (Fuik Community Center). This long-standing center offers a vital after-school tutoring program for many children in Fuik as well as AWANA club on Sundays. It was the talk of the neighborhood as many neighbors reported, "The Center now has a new roof." The owners Cesar and Emma Eman could not be happier. Emma Eman said, "My heart jumped for joy when I saw the bright blue roof from blocks away."

The second location was at the Jan Doret Ball field where a smaller group gathered to help Coach Charlton Cijntje to clean up the park, work on the pitcher's mound, and paint the bathroom house and snack bar as he prepared for an upcoming tournament. Also, USFOL staff provided a Bobcat backhoe to make light work of building another access bridge to the field. Coach Cijntje coaches a team in which more than 125 teenagers are involved from the surrounding community. Coach Cijntje also leads the national Curacao World Series Little League team every year to Williamsport, PA for the championship series. Coach Cijntje was pleased by the progress that was made and the assistance given by the USFOL to provide his team a suitable place to practice and play baseball. □



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Ministerial candidates to be named by March 3

~ *Atacho named Formateur* ~

WILLEMSTAD--Parliament President Pedro Atacho was officially named Formateur by Governor of the Netherlands Antilles Frits Goedgedrag Tuesday afternoon.

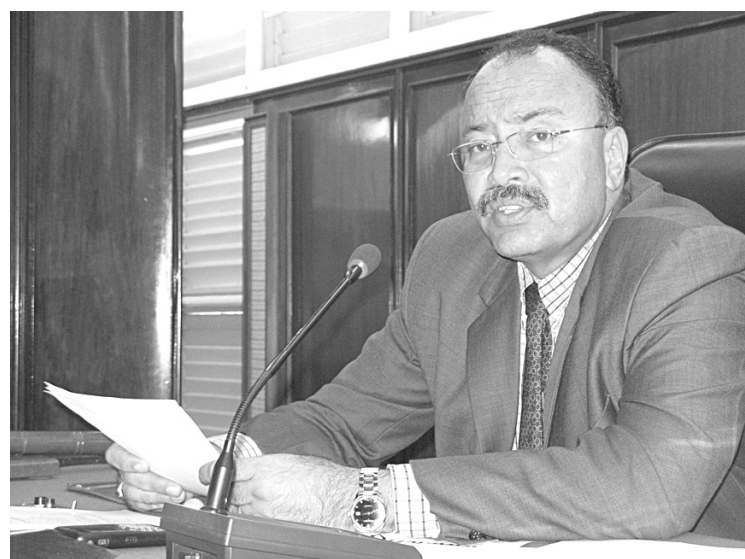
Atacho has been tasked with vetting the candidates for the new PAR-led Central Government Cabinet.

He has informed the six

political parties that signed the Philipsburg Accord on February 19 to form the new government, via letter, that they must submit the names of their ministerial candidates and state secretaries by Wednesday, March 3.

Curricula vitae of the candidates have to be submitted by Friday, March 5,

along with the questionnaire each candidate is required to fill out. The questionnaire will help Atacho determine whether any candidate's personal or business activities conflict with the role of minister and the portfolio(s) he/she is to take on. Atacho wants to start interviewing the candidates in the week of March 8.



National Alliance (NA) will appoint two ministers to the new cabinet. The candidates are tipped to be incumbent Constitutional Affairs Minister Roland Duncan and current State Secretary of Public Health Patrick Illidge. □

Red Cross St. Maarten hopes to build an HIV/AIDS counselling centre and a disaster-proof shelter

Local Red Cross enters new phase

AIRPORT--Red Cross St. Maarten hopes to build an HIV/AIDS counselling centre and a disaster-proof shelter in the next seven years.

Chairman/Director Bobby Velasquez says local representatives believe an agreement with the Dutch Red Cross last December will fuel the change St. Maarten needs.

Creating shelters and clinics to support emergency victims and expanding old-age homes to give more senior citizens places to live are among the Red Cross' main projects. "The Red Cross has entered into a new phase as of January 12," Velasquez told The Daily Herald.

The local Red Cross must fight its way back from three turbulent years that hurt the organisation's credibility. Two years ago, St. Maarten's Red Cross was broke: brigaders scrambled to find money for relief supplies after each emergency and were close to pulling out of hurricane support for lack of resources. The Red Cross met with government's health and disaster-response sectors about funding that year.

It threatened to pull out of emergency relief in 2008 because government refused to help fund its activities. Two hurricane seasons passed before the local chapter received help.

Red Cross representatives from the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba received formal cooperation from the Dutch Red Cross on December 12, 2009, to assist

with finances. Each of the six islands now has a self-contained branch of the Red Cross responsible for its development, falling under the Dutch Red Cross.

They can request help from the Netherlands when needed. "They are willing to help (with finances); they are willing to send help," local board member Joe Peterson said.

The organisation now has some breathing room for starting projects, but its heads insist the pressure to raise funds on-island remains. "The Netherlands has always been there for us," Peterson said. "Being a part of the Dutch Red Cross does not mean all of our problems have passed."

The Red Cross says St. Maarten needs a weather-proof bullet-proof emergency-response shelter in Simpson Bay for on-site treatment during emergencies in and around Princess Juliana International Airport (PJIA).

"In case of disaster, we can't wait to take people over the hill to Cay Hill to the hospital," said Velasquez, who has been with the local Red Cross since its inception in the 1970s. Hundreds of planes arrive and take off each month at PJIA, one of the busiest airports in the region. "Whatever the emergency, we need that."

Several years ago, the local Red Cross drafted a plan for a two-storey clinic/counselling centre to evaluate HIV/AIDS patients privately and to counsel residents living with the disease. Velasquez said they couldn't

get it funded the first time and that they were trying a second time.

The Red Cross is working on a five- to seven-year operational plan to guide the organisation. Peterson said the Dutch Red Cross insisted that local chapter define its goals for the coming years, accounting for projects, financing and assistance. Before asking for any help, the local Red Cross must show that "we tried on our own."

"You have to indicate what you want to do, what you will need and where you want to go [before getting the help]," Peterson said.

A Dutch Red Cross representative is expected on-island next week to help St. Maarten.

At its heart, the Red Cross is about people. "We always need more volunteers," Velasquez said, urging the community to donate time to the Red Cross. □



HUMAN HINTS

Increase The Probability of Future Energy

Yesterday, we discussed the second law of thermodynamics, that systems tend toward disorder. Wood rots and civilizations crumble when left untouched by people. When not acted upon by an external force, all of the Universe tends toward disorder.

Disorder is the natural state of energy. When we manipulate energy with our thoughts and our actions, we make the energy more orderly so that it becomes useful to us. It is each Human's daily duty to manipulate energy into a more orderly, useful form.

As Humans, we hold the power to increase order. We do this through our thoughts

and actions, moment by moment, hour by hour, day by day, year after year, lifetime after lifetime. From the moment we wake up to the moment we fall asleep, the entire day is filled with action for the purpose of adding order.

We are all Disorder Minimization Machines, with emotion. With practice, we can learn to become more efficient in adding order to our lives.

Our thoughts and emotions lead our actions, and directed action forms our lives. We set a goal, then direct our bodies to do what is necessary to reach it. Our thoughts of a goal add focus to our actions, so that each

action brings us closer to the goal. When we focus our thoughts and actions, we literally manipulate energy to add order to our lives, and reach any goal we chose.

When we direct our energy toward a goal, we increase the order of a specific potential future, thereby increasing the probabilities of our future containing the specific energies that we focus on. When you focus your thoughts, actions and emotions on a certain future, you become entrained to that energy.

Until Tomorrow...

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~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought.

HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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Silver lining

There can be little doubt left that the 10-10-10 date for new relations in the Kingdom to take effect is no longer feasible. The current Second Chamber of the Dutch Parliament no longer will handle the law proposals to make the dismantling of the Netherlands Antilles possible now that the Balkenende Cabinet has fallen.

It's obvious that until that happens, Curaçao and St. Maarten will not attain country status and the BES islands Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba will not become public entities of the Netherlands. With elections for a new Second Chamber scheduled for June 9, the delay could be considerable and the suggestion even was made to think more in terms of 11-11-11.

There is no guarantee either that the next Dutch Cabinet will honour all commitments made by the current one in this regard, even though government is supposed to be a continuity. The fact of the matter is that the final say lies with the future Parliament and unless a majority still backs the agreements there may well be changes.

Of course, that does not mean the islands should stop working on preparations for their changes in status. In that sense, some delay might work out as a blessing, because there is still much to be done and already there were growing doubts in The Hague about the readiness of especially St. Maarten. What must not happen, however, is for the Island Territory to take over any more tasks, responsibilities, personnel and other expenses from the Central Government until it actually has the money needed for all this literally in the bank. Instead, the Executive Council should concentrate on balancing and presenting the 2010 budget which, considering the latest political developments, realistically speaking no longer should have to contain provisions for Country St. Maarten, at least not for this year.

While the prospect of yet another delay in the constitutional process that has already dragged on for decades is indeed frustrating, every cloud has a silver lining. There would no longer be need for a second election this year for an expanded Island Council that would become the first Parliament of Country St. Maarten, tentatively scheduled for mid-June, less than five months after the January 22 elections for the Antillean Parliament.

With a new Central Government to be sworn in on March 26 and the current Island Council in office until July 1, 2011, that should at least mean some political tranquillity and stability on the island. This in turn would allow the elected representatives at both levels to focus more energy on the still-recovering tourism and the many pressing social issues with which "The Friendly Island" is coping. □

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The authentic local seafood restaurant.

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A new burst of creativity from Ateliers '89 is now on display



Ateliers '89 is a foundation dedicated to the advancement of culture on Aruba. Artist Elvis Lopez is founder and president, and he regularly organizes free workshops with internationally recognized artists in all aspects of the arts, visual, literary, dramatic and performing. The latest 1 month class had a gala opening of their works on Thursday, February 4, and as is usually the case with the shows at Ateliers '89, the collection is evocative and provocative, leaving more than one observer reconsidering their interpretation of what constitutes "art".

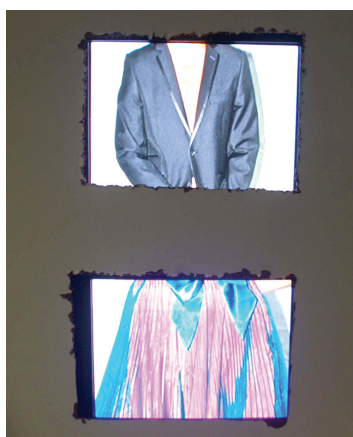
The two instructors working with the classes over January were Martine Neddham, teaching "Virtual Persons," and Hermann Gabler, whose subject was "Stand-ins." Martine reports she is elated and more than a little surprised by what her students produced; works she considered had remarkable depth from a relatively young group, one student being only 13.

Virtual Persons required the class to construct an identity and how it determines a creation. The medium was completely up to the student, and the



results were sculptures of odd objects, videos, collages, and a very interesting hand drawn installation by Philbert Tromp titled "The Story of the First Pen on Earth," which demonstrates a remarkable talent for illustration.

Ateliers '89 is a bastion of the Avant-Garde on Aruba; the students are encouraged to go beyond the boundaries of what is conventionally defined as art and explore deeply their psyche and powers of self-expression. The results of Hermann Gabler's "Stand-in" are fine examples of what is possible, forcing the viewers to contemplate the message and potential. Such art produces very different results from one observer to the next, as each person brings their own experience and emotions to how they interpret the work. One large piece by Karl



Goedgedrag uses foil covered with what appears be dirt, and, when studied, appears not only differently from various angles, but also reveals intricate patterns within the work. Initially one may see a tree trunk; from another angle, a pair of overturned legs, or even a Madonna and Child can be found among the folds of foil.

Again, Ateliers '89 has brought forth the message of unconfined artistic expression; how important it is to not limit imagination and encourage non-conformity. The current class included some well-known island artists such as Eefje van der Straten-Twillert and Miriam d'Lisle, both of them producing works that were in stark contrast to those for which they are best known, demonstrating their ability and willingness to expand and grow as artists. Martine

commented on the show, "This was a great experience for me, to facilitate this creativity, and see how they responded, especially in a class so young. I think it isn't always the task of the art teacher to impart knowledge, but to empower. I am very proud of the results."

Ateliers '89 can be visited daily from 9:00 AM until 6:00. The current show will be on display until the finish of the next workshop, which begins on February 22 and ends March 18. Classes are 4 nights a week from 6:30 to 8:30 PM, Monday through Thursday. The coming classes will be "Drawing & Music" with Jonas Ohlsson and "Painting & Sound" with Daniela Bershan. To inscribe for the free workshops, call Elvis Lopez at 588-5776 or 565-4613. For more information visit their website: www.ateliers89.com.

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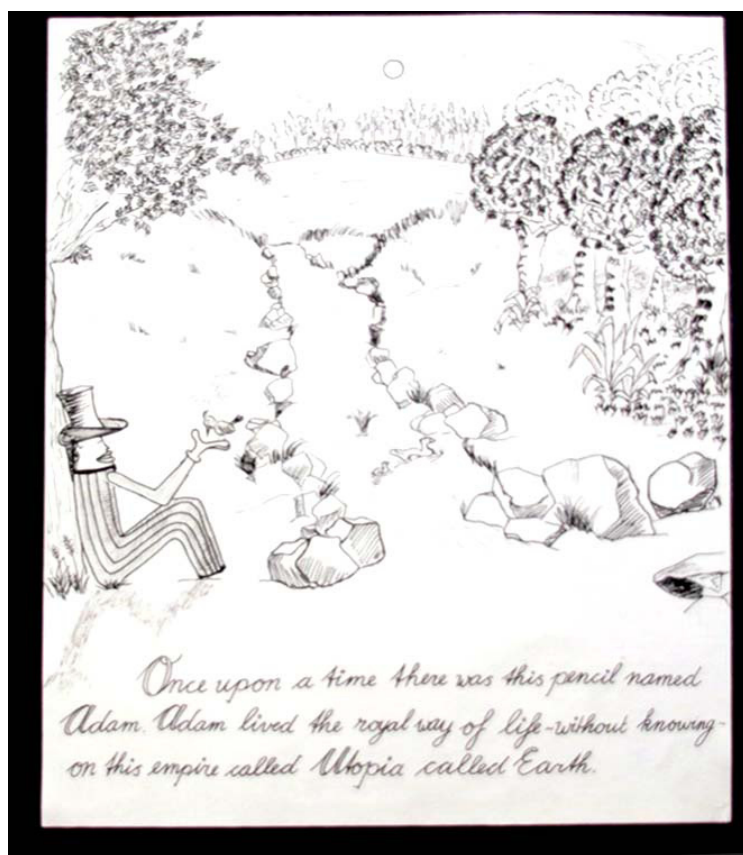
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The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, home-made soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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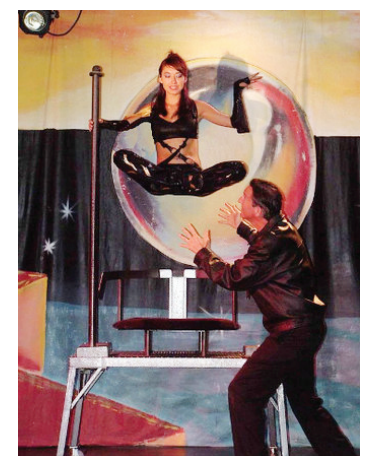
highest level, a lot of fun from start to finish, laugh-out-loud funny, intelligent, sophisticated, unconventional grand illusions, that will keep you asking, 'how the heck did he do that?' Perfect for the holiday season, have you ever dreamed of disappearing and reappearing in an instant? Master illusionist, comedy magician, Adam Steinfeld opened DEC 25, MagicLive show at the WESTIN, Aruba, nightly 9PM, every night, doors open at 8:30PM, and tickets may be purchased at the door, in the intimate Magic Live! theater-of-illusions theater, every seat is close to the stage. In his new illusion he calls; "PRESENT", a tall girl steps into a tiny box, elevated in-the-air, the box spins 360 degrees,

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and on network television, Mr. Steinfeld recently authored "the Houdini Conspiracy", aka "Houdini Lives!", a collaborated work with new england mystery writer Al Blanchard, he believes will be turned into a feature film. The intimate Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions showroom is located just off the lobby of the Westin-Aruba in high-rise area, j.e. irausquin boulevard 77. Palm Beach, Aruba. Magic Live!® BOX

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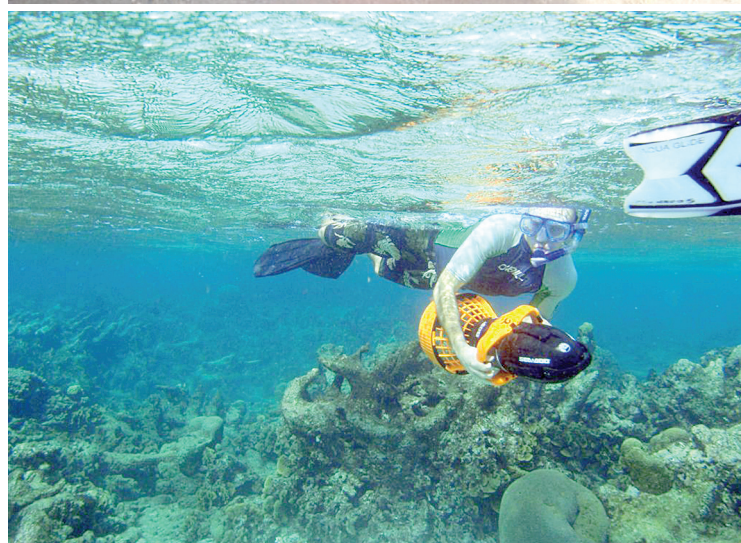
First time Aruba guests love the island's amenities



PALM BEACH - Mitch and Dana Aschliman are in Aruba for their first time. Dana is Kent Gerbers cousin and since Kent has been to Aruba 18 times, they came to stay at

the Marriott's Surf Club with him and they are diving and snorkeling with Kent. They are farmers back home in Indiana and have hogs and grain farmers. Dana's parents are

Marriott Owners in Cayman Island which they have been there many times, but never to Aruba. They are having a blast and say they will be back to Aruba. Mitch and Dana have been married for 6 years. □



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INDOOR & OPEN AIR

NAAZ Chairman confirms 10-10-10 to be impossible

THE HAGUE--The target date October 10, 2010, to dismantle the Netherlands Antilles and kick off Countries Curaçao and St. Maarten is definitely passé, because the law proposal to amend the Kingdom Charter will not be handled in the Dutch Parliament's Second Chamber at this stage.

Second Chamber Permanent Committee for Antillean and Aruban Affairs NAAZ Chairman Willibrord van Beek concluded that 10-10-10 was unattainable after consulting members of the different parties in his committee. "Forget 10-10-10. More feasible would be 11-11-11," he said on Tuesday. The NAAZ Committee is greatly divided over whether to declare the legislation proposals of the constitutional reform process "controversial" and cease the handling of these laws, or to continue the legislation trajectory as planned.

One thing was certain: the Charter cannot be amended now that the Balkenende IV Cabinet has caretaker status and new elections have been called for June 9. "It is unthinkable that the Charter would be amended under a caretaker cabinet. The Charter ranks higher than the Constitution, so that is impossible," said Van Beek. Constitutional experts agree on this.

Even if the NAAZ Committee decided in its meeting next week Tuesday that it would continue handling all the other legislation proposals for Countries Curaçao and St. Maarten and for the BES islands Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba as "public entities" of the Netherlands, the target date of October 10, 2010

would remain unattainable. The amendment to the Charter is necessary to dismantle the Netherlands Antilles and establish Curaçao and St. Maarten as countries and the BES islands as "public entities."

"That is a pity for the process and painful for the Netherlands Antilles, but that is the reality. It certainly is not a matter of unwillingness from our side," said Van Beek, who hoped to decide today, Wednesday, whether to handle the first package of BES laws on Thursday, March 4.

The majority of the parties – Christian Democratic Party CDA, Labour Party PvdA, Democrats D66, green left party GroenLinks and Christian Union (CU) – are in favour of handling the BES laws next week Thursday. The liberal democratic VVD party has no objections for "practical reasons." But the Socialist Party (SP) and the Party for Freedom PVV are against. Chances are great

that Van Beek will overrule these two parties and allow the March 4 meeting to continue.

Van Beek has sent a letter to the members of the Committee, asking them to indicate by next week Tuesday whether they agree to continue the plenary handling of the first BES law package. He also asked if the members were willing to meet with a delegation from Bonaire's government next week.

Van Beek further wanted to know if the members considered the Kingdom Consensus Laws and the amendment to the Charter controversial. Lastly, he asked the members whether the Committee's visit to Curaçao and St. Maarten planned for March 6-14 should continue. Member of Parliament (MP) Johan Remkes (VVD) said on Tuesday that he didn't think the Kingdom Consensus Laws to amend the Charter and regulate the system of maintaining law and order

should be passed before the elections. "We have principle objections to this," he said. He added that the doubts in the Second Chamber about whether St. Maarten would be able to function as a country had not diminished since the December 2008 motion.

According to Remkes, declaring legislation proposals "controversial" partly depended on State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten and whether she was willing to accommodate the Second Chamber in its objections. But, he added, "I don't see that happening."

Remkes stressed that the State Secretary had committed to 10-10-10, not the Second Chamber. "I doubt whether October 10 was attainable even if the cabinet hadn't fallen," he said.

MP Hero Brinkman (PVV) had a short reply to Van Beek's request: "The entire Antilles dossier is controversial, except the referendum in Bonaire."

MP Ronald van Raak (SP) said a number of legislation proposals were controversial. "Those can't be handled before the elections, and that will definitely not happen. The question is whether to handle the other laws, when you know that they will be put away in a folder," he said.

MP Cynthia Ortega-Martijn (CU) didn't think the Netherlands Antilles should be duped by the Dutch cabinet crisis. She made a case Tuesday to continue handling the legislation. She said that the Kingdom Movement of Persons Law and the Kingdom Visa Law should be declared controversial because of the objections from the side of the Netherlands Antilles.

Ortega-Martijn said her party didn't consider the law to amend the Charter controversial. She stressed that the process should not be stagnated. The working visit to the islands starting next week can continue, and the Bonaire delegation is most welcome, in her opinion. □



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Bonaire to Install Hybrid Wind-Biodiesel Energy System

Saft will supply battery storage based on nickel battery technology.

Saft, the world specialist in the design and manufacture of high-tech batteries for industry and defence, is currently delivering a major contract for a 3 MW energy storage system that will ensure a continuous supply of grid electricity from the world's largest hybrid wind/diesel power project to date, on the Caribbean island of Bonaire. The Saft energy storage system, based on advanced nickel-based battery technology, will store energy from the island's isolated grid and then deliver it as required to provide backup power to maintain a totally reliable and stable power grid serving a local population of 14,500 people and around 100,000 holiday visitors a year. Bonaire is a small island of around 250 km² located 80 km north of the coast of Venezuela. The island's main power plant burnt down in 2004, so until recently its annual power consumption of 75,000 MWh was met by a set of rented container (light-fuel) diesel generator systems. The new sophisticated sustainable power scheme, developed by the Dutch-German consortium EcoPower Bonaire BV on behalf of Water en Energie

Bedrijf Bonaire (WEB), the state-run energy provider in the Dutch Antilles, will enable the entire island to switch to eco-friendly energy, with 12 wind turbines providing a total of 11 MW and a 14 MW biodiesel power plant. Saft was called in by consortium member Enercon, the wind turbine and system supplier, to develop and supply the battery energy storage system that will form a vital element of a safe, stable island grid. Its main role is to maintain power quality and continuity of supply in critical situations, such as a sudden increase in demand or failure of a wind turbine or diesel generator, preventing the possibility of a power black-out. The battery is capable of delivering just over 3 MW for well over two minutes, allowing sufficient time for an additional diesel generator to be started and brought on line. "The Bonaire project is a further example of the steadily increasing recognition that energy storage technology will play a key role in the successful delivery of renewable energy schemes", said Xavier Delacroix, the General Manager of Saft's IBG division. "Saft's

advanced battery technology and growing experience in renewable energy applications mean that we are well positioned to support this type of project with reliable, efficient and cost-effective energy storage systems." The battery system has already been built by Saft and is currently undergoing customer acceptance tests in preparation for delivery to the site in Bonaire in the first quarter of 2010.

About Saft

Saft (Euronext: Saft) is a world specialist in the design and manufacture of high-tech batteries for industry. Saft batteries are used in high performance applications, such as industrial infrastructure and processes, transportation, space and defence. Saft is the world's leading manufacturer of nickel batteries for industrial applications and of primary lithium batteries for a wide range of end markets. The group is also the European leader for specialised advanced technologies for the defence and space industries and world leader in lithium-ion satellite batteries. Saft is also delivering its lithium-ion technology to the emerging

applications of clean vehicles and renewable energy storage. With approximately 4,000 employees worldwide, Saft is present in 18 countries. Its 15 manufacturing sites and extensive sales network enable the group to serve its customers worldwide. Saft is listed in the SBF 120 index on the Paris Stock Market. Technical note on energy storage system for the Caribbean island of Bonaire

Project background

Bonaire is a small island of around 250 km² located 80 km north of the coast of Venezuela. The island's main power plant burnt down in 2004, so until recently its annual power consumption of 75,000 MWh was met by a set of rented container (light-fuel) diesel generator systems. The new sophisticated sustainable power scheme, developed by Dutch-German consortium EcoPower Bonaire BV on behalf of Water en Energie Bedrijf Bonaire (WEB), the state-run energy provider in the Dutch Antilles, will enable the entire island to switch to eco-friendly energy, with 12 wind turbines providing a total of 11 MW, a 14 MW biodiesel power plant and a 3 MW energy storage system. The scheme will reduce CO₂ emissions by an estimated 35,000 tonnes per year; this figure will rise to 70,000 tonnes once the biodiesel generator switches to biofuel.

Backup power maintains grid stability

The essential role of the Saft energy storage system is to provide backup power to ensure that the main frequency of the Bonaire grid remains under constant control at the steady 50 Hz required for grid stability. So if the frequency should start to drop - which might happen due either to a sudden increase in load or a loss of generation - the battery will supply just over 3 MW for well over two minutes. This

will allow sufficient time for an additional diesel generator to be started and brought on line.

Artificial load

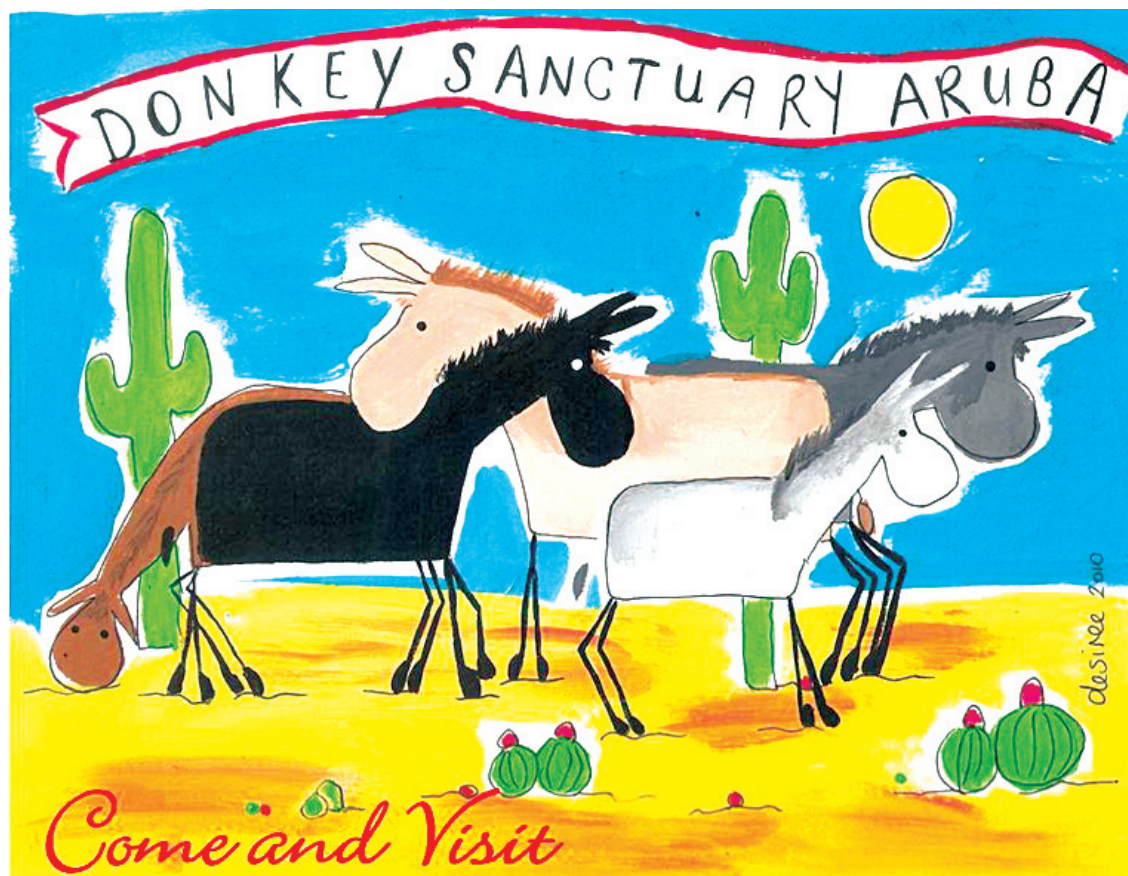
The energy storage system is also designed to handle the alternate case where a sudden decrease in load, such as when a line fault causes a large number of consumers to be disconnected simultaneously, results in an increase in grid frequency. Normally, the battery will be held at a 90 percent SOC (state-of-charge), so it can be brought on line as an artificial load. The Saft battery will also help to maintain power quality by providing instant response to smooth out small peak loads.

New design SMRX battery

The Bonaire project is the first to use Saft's new nickel-based SMRX block battery design that combines the high power capability of its well proven SRX cells with the compact, lightweight construction pioneered with its MRX batteries. The use of the SMRX batteries has enabled Saft to design a high performance 640 V battery with a nominal capacity of 1320 AH that can fit into three standard transportation containers for ease of installation and commissioning.

Project participants

Eneco: Project developers for the Bonaire project and the majority shareholder (90%); responsible for project development, contracting, financing and operation
Enercon: A German wind turbine and system supplier that is responsible for the wind-diesel load balancing system and is supplying wind turbines (5% shareholder)
MAN: A German truck and engine manufacturer that is supplying diesel generators (5% shareholder)
Saft: The high-tech battery specialist is supplying the 3 MW energy storage system



Chávez espera respeto de Colombia para restitución plena relación

PLAYA DEL CARMEN, México (AP) — El presidente venezolano Hugo Chávez dijo que espera respeto y confianza del gobierno de Colombia para lograr una restitución “plena” de sus relaciones, y afirmó que está dispuesto a reunirse con su colega Alvaro Uribe con quien tuvo un altercado en la cumbre latinoamericana de la unidad.

Chávez calificó el martes de “absurda” el supuesto embargo comercial de Venezuela a Colombia que Uribe le reclamó la víspera y derivó en un enfrentamiento verbal, aunque luego considerado superado con la creación de un grupo de amigos coordinado por el dominicano Leonel Fernández para superar sus diferencias. El mandatario venezolano consideró el incidente un “hecho altamente lamentable, doloroso, pero que no opaca ni mancha el triunfo de esta cumbre”, en referencia al acuerdo de constituir un nuevo bloque latinoamericano que no incluya a Estados Unidos y Canadá.

“Hace falta un gobierno en Colombia que respete al gobierno de Venezuela... nosotros respetamos a Colombia, queremos volver



El presidente venezolano Hugo Chávez, a la derecha, y su colega cubano Raúl Castro saludan durante la cumbre latinoamericana en Playa del Carmen, México, el martes 23 de febrero de 2010. (AP foto/ Eduardo Verdugo)

a trabajar con el gobierno colombiano”, aseguró.

“Ratifico nuestra mejor intención por retornar a la calma”, añadió el mandatario, al referirse por primera vez al altercado en el que según un funcionario que tuvo conocimiento del incidente Uribe lo instó a “ser varón”.

Chávez no confirmó versiones de que él le habría dicho a Uribe que se fuera “pa'l carajo”, y se limitó a comentar

que se exaltaron “y nos dijimos lo que había que decir”.

Aseguró que desde antes de que ocurrieran los reclamos, el presidente dominicano le había advertido que había una versión de que Uribe aprovecharía la cumbre para

hablar sobre las relaciones. Fernández, dijo el venezolano, le había pedido a Uribe que evitara hacerlo.

Chávez refirió que Uribe dijo que Colombia estaba sometido a un bloqueo similar al que Estados Unidos tiene

sobre Cuba. “Eso es como para reírse, es un chiste, eso no lo cree ni un niño de cuarto grado”, señaló.

El mandatario boliviano Evo Morales acusó a su colega de Colombia de ser un “agente” de Estados Unidos que intentó hacer fracasar la cumbre latinoamericana al provocar el altercado con el presidente venezolano. Aseguró que Uribe provocó a Chávez.

“¿Cuál es mi conclusión? Como en este evento... venimos a debatir una nueva organización sin Estados Unidos, pues los agentes de Estados Unidos vienen a tratar de empantanar y hacer fracasar este evento. Es mi conclusión personal”, dijo Morales.

Elogió que al final se pudiera resolver el problema y “felizmente este evento, pese a gente del imperio, no ha sido ningún fracaso y este documento (sobre el nuevo bloque) es la base para construir esta nueva institucionalidad sin Estados Unidos”. □

Perú espera mejorar relaciones con Bolivia

LIMA (AP) — El canciller José García Belaunde dijo el miércoles que Perú busca mejorar las relaciones con Bolivia y ese es “uno de los objetivos” que se ha trazado hasta fines del gobierno de Alan García, en julio de 2011.

“Espero que se abra una oportunidad con Bolivia que inaugura gobierno ... que es el mismo presidente (Evo Morales) con una mayoría absoluta parlamentaria”, dijo García Belaunde entrevistado por Radioprogramas.

Añadió que durante su viaje a la Cumbre de la Unidad de América Latina y el Caribe en México pudo conversar con el presidente Evo Morales y consideró que “hay un mejor ambiente” debido a que “con La Paz no se tiene conflictos contenciosos”.

El canciller admitió que en el pasado hubo “desinteligencias” pero reafirmó “que Perú no va a ser obstáculo a una solución al problema de la mediterraneidad de Bolivia” que perdió su acceso al mar en la Guerra del Pacífico en 1879 ante Chile. No dio detalles del diálogo, pero dijo que la conversación fue distendida y Morales “toma las cosas con sentido del humor” □

Arzobispado de Buenos Aires en contra de autorización boda gay

BUENOS AIRES (AP) — El Arzobispado de Buenos Aires se manifestó el miércoles en contra de un fallo judicial que autorizó el matrimonio entre dos hombres en la capital argentina, al considerar que el gobierno local “tiene la obligación de apelar” esa medida. El fallo que dictó el martes la jueza Elena Liberatori es contrario a legislación que rige en Argentina, señaló un comunicado del Arzobispado al que tuvo acceso AP. La jueza en lo Contencioso Administrativo Elena Liberatori hizo lugar a un amparo presentado por una pareja de hombres --cuya identidad no trascendió-- y ordenó que el Registro Civil les otorgue un turno para concretar su unión.

Según organizaciones de lesbianas y homosexuales, el gobierno de Buenos Aires no tiene previsto apelar dicho fallo judicial.

Pero el Arzobispado porteño que encabeza

el presidente de la Conferencia Episcopal, cardenal Jorge Bergoglio, indicó que la legislación civil argentina “regula el matrimonio como una entidad civil integrada por un hombre y una mujer”.

En ese sentido, también citó la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos, el Pacto Internacional de los Derechos Civiles y Políticos y la Convención Americana de los Derechos Humanos, “los cuales tienen jerarquía constitucional desde 1994”.

“Atendiendo a que desde épocas ancestrales el matrimonio se entiende como la unión entre el varón y la mujer, su reafirmación no implica discriminación alguna”, agregó.

A fines del año pasado otros dos hombres en Buenos Aires, que finalmente tuvo lugar en la sureña localidad de Ushuaia, convirtiéndose en la primera boda de gays en América Latina. □

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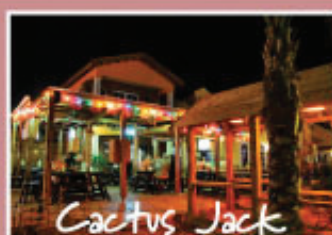


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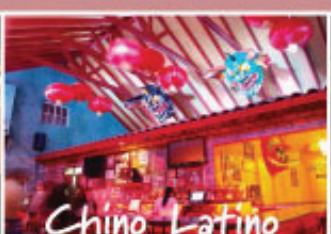
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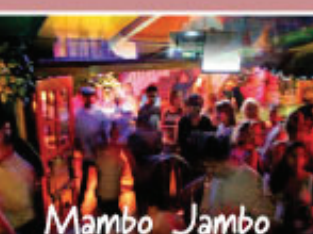
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